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GUERRILLAS  
IN THE  
SPANISH CIVIL WAR

by

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Research Program on Problems of International  
Communication and Security\*

In all the work that they, the  
partizans did, they brought added  
danger and bad luck to the people  
that sheltered them and worked  
with them.

--Hemingway,

For Whom the Bell Tolls

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## PREFACE

This monograph is a companion to three other books by myself: Guerrilla Communications (multilithed, 1966), Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965), and Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1967). It is the detailed version of one of the case studies utilized in the first work. It is written in conjunction with the Research Program on Problems of International Communication and Security sponsored by the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense under contract No. 920F-9717 and monitored by the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) under contract AF 49 (638)-1237.

My appreciation is due Professor William B. Watson of M.I.T. for suggesting the line of investigation of reasons why the senior Loyalist officials did not develop a guerrilla warfare policy. I wish particularly to thank the Swiss political journalist Dr. Ernst Halperin for calling to my attention the material on Abraham Guillen, the important article by Colonel Enrique Lister on post-Civil War guerrilla operations in Spain, for discussing his recollections of his interview in 1963 with General Alberto Bayo in Cuba, and for his several critical comments regarding both facts and interpretations. For suggestions concerning the organization and focus of this paper, I am indebted to Professor Ithiel de Sola Pool of M.I.T. I also profited from brief discussions with Professor Noam Chomsky of M.I.T. and Mr. Eric Hobsbawm. For the examples of counterinsurgency policies in Greco-Roman antiquity I am thankful to Mr. T. F. Carney. Mrs. (now Dr.) Rosemary Rogers kindly helped with translations of the material by Ernst Kantorowicz.



Among the plethora of primary documents, rapportage, and memoirs of the Spanish Civil War, few have recorded data on guerrilla operations and none give it extended treatment.<sup>1</sup> Even the dozen or so excellent major studies of the Spanish Civil War that have appeared since 1955, while brightly illuminating many of the controversial problems and questions of the period, give little or no attention to its guerrilla aspect.

Except for some tantalizing passing remarks in memoirs published in the 1930's and 1940's, it is only during the present decade that enough evidence has accumulated to permit a coherent account. Since 1956 the Russians have permitted gradual release of some new material on limited aspects of their participation, including the guerrilla aspect. These specific references by Russian and other Communists to guerrilla operations in Spain have been part of the de-Stalinization process, particularly that part concerned with the "rehabilitation" of the "Spaniards," that is, the East European Communist veterans of the Spanish Civil War whom Stalin had vilified and purged after World War II. The more recent (1964) extension of these rehabilitations to include those few "chekists" (NKVD personnel) who attempted to mitigate the horrors of Stalinist purges has probably given impetus to the current admissions of the clandestine rôle of the NKVD in Spain. However, a more direct cause has perhaps been the recent Soviet attacks on some of the guerrilla warfare theories of "Che" Guevara.

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<sup>1</sup> Except, possibly, the recent memoir by Soviet Colonel Starinov, which I have seen only in translated excerpts.

Due to my exclusive reliance on the weak published literature, this study, in its present form, should be judged as a preliminary effort only. To pave the way for future research of a more definitive nature, I have supplied two aides: first, a bibliography that is also a check-list of all relevant references found by me and, second, a biographical appendix that includes all known living eyewitness sources.

## I. OVERVIEW

Guerrilla is a Spanish word and enough of a Spanish tradition that the word--if not the reality--was quite naturally evoked in the immediate wake of the generals' blundered pronunciamiento of 17 July 1936. As the rebel generals' attempted coup d'état developed into the civil war that would bleed Spain for the next thirty-one months, the lines were quickly drawn between virtually all the Army officers and most of the regular troops in the Nationalist ("Rebel") zone and the hastily improvised militias in the dwindling Republican ("Loyalist") zone. It was professionals versus amateurs and was so perceived by Spaniards and foreigners alike. The Loyalist militia columns--Socialist miners, Anarchist trade-unionists, and Communist students, in a harlequinade of uniforms, accompanied by their women-in-arms--were widely, spontaneously, and romantically dubbed "guerrillas." Thus Jessica Mitford, 19 year-old aristocrat, promptly telephoned Communist Party headquarters in London to inquire if they wanted her as a "guerrilla" volunteer.<sup>1</sup> And Ramón Sender, the distinguished Spanish Republican novelist, applied the term to ordinary militia troops as late as October 1936.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jessica Mitford, Daughters and Rebels (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), pp. 109, 114, 131.

<sup>2</sup> Ramon Sender, Counter-Attack in Spain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1937), p. 222. Also the Manchester Guardian correspondent Frank Jellinek, The Civil War in Spain (London: Gollanez, 1938), where he characterizes the Anarchist militia leaders Durruti and del Barrio as "rather guerrilla fighters."

The Spanish Civil War provides the most detailed case study of direct Soviet intervention in guerrilla operations abroad.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it is the only such case in which the controlling rôle of Soviet state security--at that time called the NKVD--has been documented in any detail. However, it demonstrates the difficulties in reconstructing these operations solely from documentary sources. First, we remain largely dependent on either memoirs of ex-Communists or calculated revelations in the Communist press. Second, until the relevant portions of the Spanish Nationalist archives are made available to scholars, it will probably remain impossible to have a definitive look on "the other side of the hill" at the counter guerrilla policies and operations, although important material may exist in the publicly available German and Italian archives. Another course of research is open. It should be feasible to locate and commission memoirs from (or interviews with) surviving Loyalist guerrillas and perhaps even from Spanish officers and civil officials and German and Italian "advisers" who were involved with counter-measures. However, until such archival and personal sources are studied, all descriptions and conclusions given in this present paper should be taken as tentative.

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<sup>1</sup> The only other instances of proven, direct Soviet intervention with advisers and material in foreign guerrilla operations occurred in the Russo-Polish War of 1920, the East European states during WW II, and Korea in the early 1950's. However, no comprehensive accounts of any of these cases have been published either. Preliminary studies are in John A. Armstrong, The Politics of Totalitarianism (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 158-172; John A. Armstrong (editor), Soviet Partisans in World War II (Madison:

Guerrilla operations were only a minor element in the Republican government's strategy during the Spanish Civil War. Nor did Franco's Rebel army or his German, Italian, and Portuguese "volunteer" units make any use whatever of this mode of conflict.<sup>1</sup> The Loyalist government's guerrillas constituted only an ancillary behind-the-lines force. At most they achieved marginal success in disrupting Rebel lines of communication and in tying down some Rebel troops in security duties. Furthermore they played only a nominal part in organizing popular resistance. However, they are of particular interest because they were often created and organized, and exclusively trained, coordinated, and directed by the Soviet Russian NKVD mission in Loyalist Spain. Indeed, this is the only adequately documented case among the several actual and alleged interventions by Russian guerrillas in foreign

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University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 3-13; Whaley, Soviet Intervention in the Korean War (draft, 1965); Whaley, Guerrilla Communications (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T., Center for International Studies, 1966, multilithed).

<sup>1</sup> Unless one chooses to stretch a point and class as some sort of "urban guerrillas" the occasional elusive snipers of the Rebel "Fifth Column" inside besieged Madrid in 1936 and 1937. That these isolated and apparently uncoordinated individuals and occasional small groups conducted terrorist and espionage acts at all is probably attributable largely to the indiscriminate executions and other actions taken against all sorts of Rightists trapped in the Loyalist zone. This politically stupid policy left most such malcontents no alternative between death and active resistance. On this much overrated paramilitary terrorist activity see Robert Garland Colodny, The Struggle for Madrid (New York: Paine-Whitman, 1958), pp. 44 and 51; and Sefton Delmer, Trail Sinister (London: Secker & Warburg, 1961), pp. 287, 289, and 297.

wars. While many questions remain unanswered and some key points lack independent verification, it is now possible to give a rather comprehensive survey of guerrillas in Civil War Spain.

Given the fact of direct Soviet involvement in guerrilla operations in Spain, what was the place of this particular case in Soviet guerrilla warfare doctrine and practice? Guerrilla warfare was as much a part of Russian military tradition as it was of Spanish, in both cases going back to the Napoleonic Wars. The Russian experience was dramatically reinforced during her own Civil War and by behind-the-lines operations conducted by the GPU (later NKVD) during the Russo-Polish War.<sup>1</sup> Hence, with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War on 17 July 1936 and the Soviet decision in early September to intervene, Stalin was quick to consider guerrilla warfare as one of the more important modes that the war--and Soviet intervention--might take. Stalin and--independently--such a mixed bag as Nation correspondent Louis Fischer, Republican aviation hero Captain Alberto Bayo, and Barcelona

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<sup>1</sup> Remarkably, no comprehensive account of the history of Soviet Russian guerrilla doctrine and experience has been published. Even the Russians have published only case studies, memoirs, and occasional highly generalized doctrinal statements by Marx, Lenin, Frunze, and Tukhachevsky. At the time of the 1941 Wehrmacht invasion, the Red Army had neither planned nor organized for guerrilla warfare. It seems that this issue is too politically inflammatory for Soviet leaders to approach it in other than a spirit of improvisation. Until this gap is filled see particularly, Raymond L. Garthoff, Soviet Military Doctrine (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1952), pp. 391-409; Armstrong (61), 158-172; and Armstrong (64), 3-13.

Anarchist leaders all urged the Loyalist government to launch guerrilla warfare. For somewhat obscure reasons the government rejected this advice. However, the NKVD went ahead on its own to plan, train, equip, and mount behind-the-lines operations. Beginning slowly, as little more than commando-type diversionary raids across the lines, they gradually developed--partly due to over-zealous Nationalist reprisals--into full-scale guerrilla operations, complete with peasant bases but all under more-or-less close supervision of the Soviet NKVD mission.

Line-crossing by Loyalist diversionists and guerrillas was risky but common. As Hemingway writes of "Jordan," his semi-fictional guerrilla, "he knew from experience how simple it was to move behind enemy lines in all this country. It was as simple to move behind them as it was to cross through them, if you had a good guide."<sup>1</sup> This access was facilitated by the Rebel strategy of deploying its numerically inferior forces along the front in a chain of strongpoints and troop clusters, undefended, lightly patrolled gaps existing between these concentrations.<sup>2</sup> Thus it was quite possible, particularly under cover of darkness, for small groups to cross the Rebel "lines" in either direction undetected. A similar opportunity did not exist for the Rebels, because by late 1936 the Loyalists had settled on

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1950), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> As noted also by Granville Fortescue, Frontline and Deadline (New York: Putnam's, 1937), pp. 294-295.

a strategy of securing their front line with a continuous trench, however shallow and thinly manned.<sup>1</sup> "Yank" Levy specifically attributes the revival of guerrilla warfare in Spain (and in the Sino-Japanese War) to the lack of "fixed, rigid, long-term 'fronts'".<sup>2</sup>

During the Spanish Civil War, the Soviet press gave considerable attention to its military aspects, including occasional references to Loyalist guerrilla activity; but these consisted largely of unspecific and uncritical praise.<sup>3</sup> What effect, if any, their Spanish experience had on Soviet partisan tactics during World War II is unknown; although the fact that the Deputy Chief of NKVD guerrilla operations in both wars was the same person--Leonid Eitingon--suggests that some tactical experience may have carried over.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This one-sided situation probably accounts for the fact that references to small-unit raids by the Nationalists are so infrequently recorded in the literature.

<sup>2</sup> Levy (40), Chapter I.

<sup>3</sup> Armstrong (61), 159, citing the anonymously published "Partizanskaya borba v tylu ispanskikh miatezhnikov" [The partisan struggle in the rear of the Spanish rebels], Mirovye Khoziaistvo i Mirovaya Politika, No. 10, 1938, pp. 124-126.

<sup>4</sup> This point is raised and answered in similarly inconclusive terms by Armstrong (64), 11. Literary critic Malcolm Cowley once alleged that Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls was used in the Soviet Army during World War II as a "textbook of guerrilla fighting." However, this is probably a piece with Cowley's semi-legendary biography of Hemingway, judging from the fact that until quite recently the Soviet critics and censors have found this



For example, the coordination of aviation with guerrillas was first attempted in Spain, being used successfully for both supply and evacuation. However, I do not know whether this was a result of the early (1922) suggestion by Bolshevik military writer N. Yatsuk that air support be given partisan units or whether it was the model for its subsequent intensive use by the Russians during World War II.<sup>1</sup> That any strategic lessons either existed or were applied is unlikely; the Soviet General Staff seems to have used its opportunity in Spain at most as a laboratory for limited testings of new equipment and some minor tactics. Contrary to the view of most military analysts at the time (and some since), the military interventions by the Soviet Union as well as by Germany and Italy on the side of the Nationalists were urgent political decisions taken by the respective dictators against the advice of their military and diplomatic chiefs who feared a major commitment of their limited military and political power in a peripheral area.<sup>2</sup> Judging

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novel politically unacceptable for publication. Malcolm Cowley, "A Portrait of Mister Papa," Life, Vol. 25, No. 2 (10 Jan 1949), p. 100. However, the book, Guerrilla Warfare, written by the International Brigade veteran "Yank" Levy, was used during World War II as a training manual by both the British Home Guard and the American OSS, both units using International Brigade veterans as officers.

<sup>1</sup> Garthoff (53), 402. Aviation was used by both sides in Spain to re-supply and to maintain communications with surrounded and closely besieged garrisons.

<sup>2</sup> For the much overrated "testing theory" of war causation see my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965).

from one unpublished Soviet dissertation, the Russians did not find the two situations sufficiently parallel to permit valid operational lessons to be drawn. Its author concluded that the Spanish guerrillas and the Soviet partisans were not comparable because the former did not constitute a "mass movement" holding broad areas of country behind the lines as did the partisans but were mainly "diversionist" groups formed inside the Loyalist zone and sent across the lines for limited periods to perform narrowly specified tasks.<sup>1</sup>

The Russian Bolsheviks (and other Communists after them) have tended to sharply distinguish between partisans (or guerrillas) and diversionists (or commandos, rangers, terrorists, and saboteurs), ranking the latter as much less politically and socially developed groups. Meshcheriakov's dissertation reflects this doctrine. Spaniards, however, have not made this distinction. For them, guerrilla has traditionally meant--and often been--little more than an improvised, uncoordinated, rural-based revolt. This accounts for the rather indiscriminate and confused labelling in the Spanish Civil War literature where one can easily find almost any irregular unit--such as the militia columns--called a "guerrilla" force, or any form of irregular

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<sup>1</sup> Armstrong (61), 159, and Armstrong (64), 12, both citing Marklen T. Meshcheriakov, Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Ispanii v Borbe za Demokraticheskiye Svobody i Natsionalnuyu Nezavisimost Ispanii (1936-1939 gg.) [The Communist Party of Spain in the struggle for democratic freedoms and national independence in Spain, 1936-1939] (Moscow: Lenin Pedagogical Institute, 1953, manuscript), pp. 207-208. See also Garthoff (53), 401.

combat such as raids, rear guard actions, and last stands (even when performed by regular units) characterized as "guerrilla" warfare.<sup>1</sup>

Judging from contemporary propaganda, seized and declassified official documents, memoirs, and recent Spanish Nationalist histories, it seems that the British,<sup>2</sup> American, Italian, German, and even Nationalist intelligence failed to penetrate--at least to any significant depth--the NKVD-managed guerrilla operations during the Civil War. Indeed, they seemed quite unaware that it was an NKVD activity. This was a corollary of their similar and well-documented failure regarding the entire scope of the Soviet intervention whose

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<sup>1</sup> The similarity of the Spanish and Russian terms for partisan warfare only further mask their differences in concept. The Spanish guerrilla and the Russian malaya voyna both literally mean "little war."

<sup>2</sup> The remarkable official British history of Special Operations Executive (SOE) discloses that the British secret services had taken almost no cognizance of guerrilla warfare prior to WW II. Of the three small offices (all created in 1938) concerned with subversive activities, the first to examine potential uses of guerrillas in future wars was the War Office's General Staff research office, GS(R). By lucky happenstance, its chief--Major J. C. F. Holland, a sapper with experience in the Irish Troubles--was struck by the current use of guerrillas in Spain and China and on his own initiative reoriented his section's research away from army education and toward guerrilla operations. In the spring of 1939 GS(R) was renamed MI-R and on 16 July 1940 Holland's still miniscule section (with the two other small subversion groups) was reconstituted by Churchill as the SOE. M. R. D. Foot, SOE in France (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), p. 2.

general outline was more or less known but whose details remained too concealed to permit effective, overall counter-action.

Anti-guerrilla operations were, for this same reason, a failure. In fact, they proved largely counterproductive. Indiscriminate punitive attacks on rural communities suspected--falsely, as often as not--of harboring Loyalist guerrillas only drove many of the survivors--otherwise militarily inactive peasants--into self-protective guerrilla bands that were quickly taken under Soviet control or direction. This is a lesson slowly and painfully if ever absorbed. The Wehrmacht and SS never learned it during World War II in the Balkans, Russia, or Italy. By early 1965 the American command in Vietnam had at least recognized the dimensions of the problem.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, this was also a factor contributing to the growth of the two other true guerrilla forces in Spanish history: those formed during the Peninsular War being partly a reaction to undisciplined raids by French garrison troops; and the post-World War II Spanish guerrillas whose local popular support was at least occasionally due to indiscriminate reprisals by Franco's troops.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, General Frido von Senger und Etterlin, Neither Fear Nor Hope (New York: Dutton, 1964), p. 269, admits the German blunder against the Italian Partisans as late as Aug 1944. The problem in Italy was also partly conceded by General Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring, A Soldier's Record (New York: Morrow, 1954), pp. 268-279, 353-364. An identical pattern (among others) occurred in Russia in World War II; many partisan bands having developed in response to indiscriminate German occupation practices and only later being brought under Party or Army control. See Garthoff (53), 396, 398, 399, 401; and Armstrong (64), 30, 320-334, but compare additional material on pp. 142-155 that shows reprisals to have been only a minor cause of guerrilla recruitment in Russia.

Before passing the reader on to the documented mercies of historiography, I will summarize my findings and conclusions. In doing so, I will also make explicit my three major biases affecting those conclusions. I began my research with two and have found no reason to change them. First, I side with the weak, Republican leftist-leftish, Popular Front, democratic government in its overthrow by the Nationalists, whom I judge to be a singularly ugly combination of native reactionary and foreign Fascist-Nazi forces. Such stereotypes are not inappropriate in the context of the Spanish Civil War. Second, I advocate guerrilla warfare both as a sometimes moderately effective means of contributing to conventional military operations and as a frequently decisive means of mobilizing popular support for unconventional political operations. This last belief also serves as the basis for my third major bias, one which only arose during the research--namely, that the Socialist and Communists in the Republican government erred seriously if not even decisively so by rejecting the Anarchists' proposal to pursue a vigorous policy of social revolution even in the midst of the civil war. In essence, the Loyalist officials approached their crucial struggle with the pedestrian attitude that politics was the "art of the possible" when survival required that it be viewed more as the art of the "impossible."

## II. GUERRILLA OPPORTUNITIES

It is no surprise that the guerrilla mode of warfare occurred during the Spanish Civil War, Spain being the "classic" land of the guerrilla. First, it contributed the very word to our language during the Peninsula War of 1808-1814. Second, guerrilla and other closely related forms of "irregular" armed conflict had been so common in the Iberian peninsula since the second century of the pre-Christian era as to amount to a tradition<sup>1</sup>--an obvious alternative form of struggle that governments, rebels, and invaders would have to anticipate in their planning. Furthermore, during the civil war itself, the incipient revolutionary situation behind the highly permeable battlefield was an open invitation to guerrilla operations. Thus it is superficially surprising that the successive Loyalist governments persistently failed to create such units.

### A. Republican Reluctance to Sponsor Guerrilla War

A number of persons had been recommending that the Republican government engage in guerrilla warfare on a large scale. One of the earliest suggestions came from the then still pro-Communist American leftist journalist, Louis Fischer, who had gone to Spain to cover the civil war for The Nation.

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Descola, A History of Spain (New York: Knopf, 1963), traces Spanish "guerrillas" back to Viriathus in the 2nd century B.C. and to King Pelayo in the 8th century A.D. However, it is not clear from Descola's meager description that these were guerrilla forces in the sense that we mean them here.

On 12 October 1936 Fischer drafted his recommendations in a letter to Premier Francisco Largo Caballero.<sup>1</sup> Fischer conceded that: "I know some attempts have been made here. But this should be launched on a vast scale, and right now when the enemy is near."<sup>2</sup> Fischer's passing mention of earlier "attempts" probably refers to the Bayo-Uribarry commando operations at Madrid earlier that same October described below. It is also revealing of his lack of local expertise that Fischer based his arguments on Russian partisan warfare precedents, entirely overlooking the obvious Spanish one.<sup>3</sup>

Premier Largo Caballero refused these suggestions, for guerrillas--including that by Fischer--on the expressed grounds that there were neither the cadre available to train them nor the weapons to arm them.<sup>4</sup> This rationale has been echoed by others, including "Yank" Levy who argued:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Fischer, Men and Politics: An Autobiography (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941), pp. 372-377, for background and text of this letter.

<sup>2</sup> Fischer (41), 374.

<sup>3</sup> Only after sending this letter (but before his interview with the Premier) did Fischer settle down to do some homework on indigenous guerrillas, reading, he states, the "Oxford History of Napoleon's Peninsula War in Spain in 1808-09." As no book by this specific title exists, I presume Fischer is referring to Charles Oman, A History of the Peninsular War (7 vols., Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1902-1930).

<sup>4</sup> Fischer (41), 375, for Largo Caballero's reply given later that same day in his interview.

<sup>5</sup> Levy (42), 34.

There was not as much actual guerrilla war behind the enemy lines in Spain as there might have been. The trouble was that the Republican Army had to be almost entirely improvised and could only be hastily trained. Therefore most of the best efforts of those who knew how to fight went into the training of this army, and into the battles which it fought. . . . There were therefore too few people to plan and carry out guerrilla activity behind the enemy's lines.

These reasons--presuming they were the Premier's real ones--reveal a gross misconception of the nature and utility of guerrilla operations. If that form of combat were desirable under the circumstances, it was probably the one military mode where a minimum expenditure of cadre and arms could have produced maximum results. Like most stock generalizations about guerrilla warfare, this is moot, depending largely on local circumstances. For example, the Soviet partisan movement during World War II did not justify its cost in terms of enemy troops either killed, harassed, or tied down in security work. Its main value there was political: maintaining the Soviet presence in nominally occupied Russian territory.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the Duke of Wellington made deliberate, coordinated, full and effective use of the Spanish partidos against the French during his successful Peninsular Campaign. However, caution should be observed in drawing any parallels between the early Spanish guerrillas and the situation during the Spanish Civil

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<sup>1</sup> For a careful "economic" assessment of the World War II Soviet partisans see Armstrong (64), 31-39.



War, as no comprehensive monographic studies of the former exist.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, as Mao Tse-tung found and as Tito, Giap, and Guevara have reiterated, the guerrilla's "main sources of manpower and matériel are at the front," i.e. obtained by capture.<sup>2</sup> Even Stalin in his confidential letter of 21 December 1936 to Largo Caballero urged, among several other "friendly pieces of advice," that the Republican government use peasants to "set up military units of partisans behind the Fascist lines."<sup>3</sup> But Largo Caballero ignored this gratuitous advice from his principal foreign benefactor.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On Spanish guerrillas (and the comparable Portuguese Ordenanza) during the Peninsular War see Jac Weller, Wellington in the Peninsula, 1808-1814 (New York: Barnes, 1963), pp. 21, 118, 122, 186, 247, 249, 271-273, 326, 372; and Gabriel H. Lovett, Napoleon and the Birth of Modern Spain (2 vols., New York: New York University Press, 1965), index under "guerrilla."

<sup>2</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "The Present Situation and Our Tasks" (25 Dec 1947), as reprinted in Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1963), p. 348. This point has been a central theme in the current Chinese Communist propaganda for "wars of national liberation." See, for example, Lin Piao's speech of 3 Sep 1965.

<sup>3</sup> The full text of this letter was first published in an English translation by the disgruntled former Loyalist Ambassador to France, Araquistain, in The New York Times, 4 Jun 1939, p. 43. For verification of the authenticity of this letter see Julian Gorkin, Canibales Politicos: Hitler y Stalin en España (Mexico City: Ediciones Quetzal, 1941), p. 85. See also Salvador de Madariaga, Spain (2nd ed., New York: Creative Age Press, 1943), pp. 472-474, for the original French text. The letter was co-signed by Molotov and Voroshilov.

<sup>4</sup> Madariaga (43), 390-391.

It is quite true that cadre and even small-arms were in short supply throughout the war. Hence the official avoidance of the guerrilla mode may have resulted from a rational (although not necessarily wise) decision to assign the limited resources only to conventional military units. For example, in the early months of conflict, official dispersal of all arms and supplies was handled by Major Martín Blázquez in the War Ministry secretariat. The perceptive memoirs by this professional officer make quite clear the general shortage of war matériel and describe the agonizing decisions to allot scarce resources in response to urgent demands and needs of chaotically organized, unprofessional units. Although an anti-Communist, Major Martín<sup>1</sup> deliberately channeled a disproportionate amount of arms to the various Communist-led units because he judged them to be the best organized units and deemed their requests to reflect a realistic appraisal of their needs and capabilities. Requests for arms from non-Communist officers and politicians

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<sup>1</sup> Martín describes the situation only to March 1937 when he went into voluntary exile in Paris. José Martín Blázquez, I Helped to Build an Army: Civil War Memoirs of a Spanish Staff Officer (London: Secker & Warburg, 1939), pp. 120-146, 170-183, 218, 292. Major Martín cites (p. 140) the instance of the persistent requests in Aug 36 by Margarita Nelken de Paul, bloodthirsty Socialist Deputy from Extremadura (Badajoz) in the Cortes Españolas, for arms and equipment for her constituents. Doña Margarita, who had already become a fellow-traveler after her trip to the Soviet Union in 1935, finally joined the Communist Party in 1937 but broke after the war. See Gabriel Jackson, The Spanish Republic and the Civil War, 1931-1939 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 181, 362.

were all too often based on personal favor than put in terms of individual unit needs, much less in accord with any comprehensive war-plan.

In any event, when the NKVD established and directed guerrilla operations in Spain, it did so independently of an uninterested Spanish Premier and War Ministry. Colodny questionably asserts it was only during the spring of 1937 that the guerrilla's activities were coordinated through the Loyalist General Staff.<sup>1</sup> Even so, such operations never reached the dimensions that some persons and factions hoped for, as exemplified by Ehrenburg's recent recollection that when he visited the Anarchist leaders in Barcelona in April 1938 they too deplored the fact that the Republican government was still making so little use of guerrilla warfare, pointing out to him that: "Every Spaniard is a natural guerrilla fighter."<sup>2</sup> And the Spanish Anarchist journalist, Abraham Guillen, writing from his Uruguayan exile, still deplores the lack of "a Tito" in the Spanish Civil War, a lack that he attributes to the bad advice of the Russians who pressed only for "frontal confrontations."<sup>3</sup>

This illustrates a recurring theme: Spaniards who recalled their glorious guerrilla tradition but did nothing effective about it. For example,

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Garland Colodny, The Struggle for Madrid (New York: Paine-Whitman, 1958), pp. 24, 160. As most of Colodny's other references to "guerrillas" are defective, this unsupported statement about coordination should be treated skeptically.

<sup>2</sup> Ilya Ehrenburg, Eve of War 1933-1941 (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1963), p. 210. This portion of Ehrenburg's controversial memoirs was originally published in Moscow in Novy Mir in May 1962.

<sup>3</sup> "Abraham Guillen Past, Present Activities Cited" (in Spanish),

Julio Álvarez del Vayo--prominent pro-Communist Socialist in the Foreign Ministry--was quite romantically attracted since childhood to the opportunities for the guerrilleros in Spain whose very geography he characterized in his autobiography as having been "created for guerrilla warfare."<sup>1</sup> In December 1936 the Commander of the Republican Air Force, Socialist Colonel (later Communist General) Hidalgo de Cisneros, bragged to Communist Stephen Spender in Valencia that: "Even if they defeat us, we shall go on fighting there!"--indicating the Asturias mountains on a map.<sup>2</sup> Such mindless evocations of historical tradition were also noted by Arthur Koestler in the desperate last week of 1936 on the Malaga front where brave junior commanders unrealistically said that if overwhelmed by tanks they would "strangle them with our naked hands" or take the men "up into the Sierra" for partisan warfare.<sup>3</sup>

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Izquierda (Montevideo), 25 Apr 1969, p. 8, as translated into English in Joint Publications Research Service, Translations on Latin America, No. 191 (JPRS No. 48232, 13 Jun 1969), pp. 61-62.

<sup>1</sup> J. Alvarez del Vayo, The Last Optimist (London: Putnam, 1950), pp. 4-6. He also indicates with approval that the 19th Century Spanish guerrillero was both free of rank consciousness and tended to support liberal causes.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Spender, World Within World (London: Hamilton, 1951), p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Koestler, Spanish Testament (London: Gollancz, 1937), pp. 190, 191, 193. This passage and some others are factual reporting, although this book was written while Koestler was masked as a "bourgeoise" journalist for the London News Chronicle while still a secret Communist Party member writing for Willi Münzenberg's Comintern propaganda mill in Paris.

A final example of the tendency to thoughtlessly invoke the poetic tradition of guerrilla war while distorting the contextual reality is the recent account of the Garibaldi Battalion by the former Commissar-Inspector of the International Brigades, "Luigi Gallo" (Luigi Longo), that characterizes the Internationals' defense of Madrid as being in the "patriotic tradition" of the "old Spanish guerilleros."<sup>1</sup> I find it difficult to conceive a less apt characterization of the disciplined Internationals. As Longo was himself the senior Communist leader of the Italian partisans during World War II, one would expect him to mention the guerrilla operations in Spain, of which he must have been aware, if only after the fact. Nevertheless he avoids this topic as well as any other premature revelations of activities or personalities still censored by Moscow.<sup>2</sup>

When Stalin found Socialist Premier Largo Caballero--whom Pravda had once prematurely labeled "the Spanish Lenin"--too inattentive to Soviet demands, a hopefully more tractable replacement was soon found in the person of Juan Negrín. His accession as Premier in May 1937 provided the occasion

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<sup>1</sup> Luigi Longo, Le Brigade Internazionali en Spagna ([Bologna]: Editori Riuniti, 1956), p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Thus, writing in 1956, he manages a cautious conformity to the then current Soviet Communist line on disclosures of the Communist rôle in the Spanish Civil War. His book was sufficiently orthodox to be issued in Moscow in a Russian translation in 1960. Longo succeeded Togliatti as Secretary-General of the Italian Communist Party on the latter's death in 1964.

for a fresh attempt to urge development of guerrilla warfare. In this case the approach was made by the (then) non-Communist Loyalist Air Force Captain Alberto Bayo<sup>1</sup> who the previous year had led both the ill-conceived Catalanian amphibious invasion of the Balearic Islands and the first Loyalist commando group, which was improvised at the Madrid Front. As a military adviser to Premier Negrín, Captain Bayo recommended the formation of Loyalist guerrilla units. However, not only did Negrín--on advice of his non-Communist Army Chief of Staff, General Rojo<sup>2</sup>--reject this proposal, but Bayo found himself temporarily imprisoned. When released, Bayo persisted in his proposal and, in 1938, was permitted to found a guerrilla training camp in Catalonia; but, as he admitted, it was then too late to be effective.<sup>3</sup> I suspect that Bayo's

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<sup>1</sup> For biographical sketches of Bayo and other Spanish Civil War guerrillas see Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> Although Vincente Rojo--who was amnestied and returned to Spain in 1958--does not refer to this incident in his book on the major Civil War campaigns, the fact that he omits any mention of guerrilla operations is proof enough of his contempt as a professional soldier for that paramilitary mode. He does, however, stress the psychological spirit of "guerrillaism." General Vincente Rojo, España Heroica (2nd ed., Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1961,) pp. 35, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication of 25 Aug 1965 from Ernst Halperin who interviewed Bayo in Cuba in 1963. Bayo's ideas at the time are presumably the subject of his very rare La Guerra será de los Guerrilleros [It will be a guerrilla war] that he published under his own name in Barcelona in 1937.

imprisonment was the work of the NKVD which, having by then established their own guerrilla force, did not wish to see competition. In any case, by the time of his release, the Loyalist Government had effectively moderated the earlier virtual monopolization of the secret police by the Communists.

In a recent article obliquely attacking "Che" Guevara's theory that a general revolutionary situation can be induced by the implanting of guerrilla "centers," Colonel Lister--a leading member of the Spanish CP Central Committee since 1937--stated that:<sup>1</sup>

A powerful guerrilla movement behind Franco's lines became a possibility even before the civil war had ended. It could have been based on the thousands of patriots operating in the mountains in the territory held by Franco's fascists. But the successive Republican governments and their war ministers failed to seize the opportunity.

#### B. The Spanish Peasantry

Despite the need for an understanding of Spanish rural loyalties and committedness in any effort to assess either guerrilla potential in particular or its general staying power in a war of attrition, this aspect has not

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<sup>1</sup> Enrique Lister, "Lessons of the Spanish Guerrilla War (1939-1951)," World Marxist Review, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Toronto: Feb 1965), pp. 53-58, quoting from p. 53.

been adequately studied. Indeed even in the general literature on guerrilla warfare the problem is still commonly overlooked entirely or dismissed either with a catch-phrase about "spontaneous" development or, if the movement has or is presumed to have Communist leaders, with an all too facile reference to the "organizational weapon."<sup>1</sup> Several questions about the Spanish peasantry should be raised and investigated before describing the actual guerrilla operations undertaken. First, what was the attitude among the rural population toward the combattants; did they in fact favor the government? Second, what potential for guerrilla warfare existed in the countryside; were the peasants prepared politically and organizationally to engage in such combat?

If Orwell was correct in his assessment that there was "no real popular movement in Franco's rear," this alone could fully account for the official reluctance to send guerrilla groups behind the lines as well as why--as we shall see--the initial efforts were conceived only as short-range, short-duration, commando-type, line-crossing operations.<sup>2</sup> However, we shall see that this widely held view of rural Spain was incorrect.

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<sup>1</sup> Even Garthoff (53), 396, 401, stumbles over this point; although he does stress that "spontaneously developing" Soviet guerrilla groups did in part evolve during WW II from harsh Nazi occupation policies.

<sup>2</sup> George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1952), p. 69. This sensitive appreciation of some of the subtleties of the war was first published in 1938 by Eric Blair (1903-1950) under his pen-name of Orwell. As a left-wing socialist, Orwell believed that the urban proletariat



Franz Borkenau has given a brief, perceptive, pessimistic analysis of the interplay of political, social, industrial, agricultural, and military factors that created a situation where the Loyalists could not (or, at least, did not) forge a policy capable of mobilizing and harnessing the existing revolutionary impulses in the urban proletariat and provoking such impulses in the rural peasantry. He concluded that:<sup>1</sup>

. . . the great majority of the Spanish people really do not and cannot know what they are fighting for. They will defend their towns and villages against immediate aggression. They will defend their local and regional independence. They hate foreign intrusion. But most of all they wish for an end of the war.

Did a guerrilla potential even exist in the Spanish countryside? Clearly the peasantry had long-standing and deep-seated grievances,<sup>2</sup>

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and poorer peasantry neither liked Franco nor wanted him to win; but, as a POUMist sympathizer he further argued that the government's precipitate abandonment of revolutionary principles prevented the development of active hostility to the Nationalists on their own ground.

<sup>1</sup> Franz Borkenau, "Introduction" to Martín Blázquez (39), viii-xxii.

<sup>2</sup> For the state of Spanish agriculture and the peasantry before the Civil War see Jackson (65), 29-30, 80-85; Salvador de Madariaga (43), 110-117, 313-314, 345; Thomas (61), 48-52; and Gerald Brenan, The Spanish Labyrinth (New York: Macmillan, 1943), pp. 87-131, 336-340.

exceeding even those among the urban proletariat who were indeed a militantly active revolutionary force. However, unlike the factory and city workers, the peasantry was not as effectively organized by either the unions or the political parties.<sup>1</sup> Banditry, which often used guerrilla methods, had existed in the countryside since the Peninsular Wars; and it was precisely to control this type of intermittent activity that the Guardia Civil had been created in 1844 as a special gendarmerie organized along military rather than police lines.<sup>2</sup> Those sporadic, isolated risings that occurred in rural villages (pueblos) during the early 1930s were the direct result of either the transient presence of urban Anarchist agitators or were organized by local peasant Anarchist converts. However, agricultural strikes accounted for relatively few lost work days.<sup>3</sup> This is particularly striking because the powerful urban unions traditionally gained their activists from among the landless laborers (braceros) of Andalusia who had immigrated to the factories of Barcelona. And by 1932 even the Socialist (UGT)-founded Federation of Land Workers (FETT) had achieved a marked success by more-or-less organizing 445,000 rural members, mostly braceros, and was modestly successful in encouraging peasant strikes and land seizures before the Civil War.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the politics of the Spanish proletariat before and during the Civil War see the cited works of Borkenau, Brenan, Fischer, Jackson, and Orwell.

<sup>2</sup> Brenan (43), 156-157.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas (61), 48-49; Jackson (65), 69-71, 85, 96-97, 211.

<sup>4</sup> On the Federation of Land Workers see Jackson (65), 29, 69, 79-80, 112, 222-223; and Brenan (43), index.

In the late 19th century the newly formed urban middle class Anarchist militants began a deliberate campaign of prosylitizing among the Andalusian braceros, moving from village to village, conducting night classes to teach literacy and preach the evils of religion, prostitution, gambling, alcohol, meat, coffee, and tobacco. Soon there developed an ideological division--again most strongly influential among the rural Anarchists of Andalusia--that sought self-sufficient cooperative pueblos. In common with their urban proletarian comrades, the rural Anarchists adopted the general strike as their main agitational tool and with it won similar moderate successes in securing higher wages and shorter hours, but the latter's main purpose was to achieve local autonomy rather than material betterment.<sup>1</sup>

The only center of organized revolt outside the cities has proven to be in the mines. The highly unionized and politicized coal-miners of Asturias revolted in October 1934 and were brutally suppressed in two weeks by government forces.<sup>2</sup> That this situation is endemic rather than fortuitous is seen in the fact that beginning anew in April 1962 the 80,000 dinamiteros of Asturias have reasserted their defiance of authority by organized strikes--

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<sup>1</sup> Brennan (43), 157-173-202.

<sup>2</sup> All major unions were represented in the mines, from the predominant Socialist UGT, through Communists and Trotskyists, to the Anarchist CNT. The best effort to reconstruct the social, political, and military aspects of the poorly documented Asturias revolt of 1934 is Jackson (65), 148-168.

but without violence on either side.<sup>1</sup> During the Civil War, the miners of Asturias made at least two contributions to the Loyalists: numerous veterans of the 1934 revolt who had spent the intervening years in Moscow were returned as Comintern officers to staff the Army and the Spanish Communist Party (CPE), and others were reportedly recruited by Captain Bayo to serve in his semi-guerrilla column at Madrid.

In sum, what the peasants--even the revolutionized ones--lacked was organization. Without this it was not possible to channel their deep grievances of all that they believed the Rebel generals stood for. The very success of the Anarchists in rather widely disseminating their philosophy in the receptive countryside only reinforced the already existing separatistic and individualistic tendencies that prevented united popular action by the Spanish peasants.<sup>2</sup> As Borkenau concluded:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Welles, Spain: The Gentle Anarchy (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 13, 95-96, 101, 102, 128-130, 216.

<sup>2</sup> Eric Hobsbawm makes this point precisely in his case study of the pre-Civil War Andalusian agrarian Anarchists. Although Hobsbawm's account is based mainly on Brennan's data, his own analysis is more to the point. E. J. Hobsbawm, Social Bandits and Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 74-92. This book appeared after Hobsbawm broke with the British Communist Party over the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Thus his analysis is that of a Marxist non-Communist.

<sup>3</sup> Franz Borkenau, The Spanish Cockpit (London: Faber and Faber, 1937), pp. 281-282.

The masses wanted to fight and did fight heroically, but they wanted it to be a fight in the old guerilla manner of 1707 and 1808, a rising from village to village, from town to town; against the threat of tyranny.

But that could not be. The numerous, isolated rural revolts were thwarted by government policy.<sup>1</sup> And the revolutionary formation of anarchic militia columns was soon made obsolete by the reinforcement of modern foreign arms and troops from Germany and Italy. It may be accurate to characterize these initial revolts as "spontaneous"; but it is quite incorrect to apply this adjective, as do Díaz and Colodny, to the guerrilla groups that subsequently formed behind the lines.

Thus, while the revolutionary spirit was endemic in agrarian communities from the late 19th century until the Civil War, actual revolts were sporadic and uncoordinated and hence their control never presented more than a local police problem. Even in July 1936 when the Republican Government called for resistance against the Rebels, all it triggered was an epidemic of still-uncoordinated local rural revolutions that permitted both the Rebel and Loyalist police and military forces to suppress them one by one at leisure.

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<sup>1</sup> For the scant references to the political and social conditions in rural Spain during the Civil War see particularly Borkenau (37), 79-80, 93-108, 148-157, 202-207.

But did the Loyalists believe they could have mobilized the peasantry? The question is not merely an impractical excursion into the fantasy world of hypothetical futures.<sup>1</sup> We shall see that its answer determines the answer to the final question of why the Loyalists chose not to sponsor a wide-scale guerrilla war.

The initial, unspecific call for popular resistance came from the Popular Front Government in Madrid, but this was a body that both the rural and urban Anarchists were on principle unwilling to recognize.<sup>2</sup> The Anarchists took the occasion to launch their own revolutionary program in the countryside, expropriating and collectivizing the land and property and frequently murdering priests, gentry, and policemen. Had the government succeeded in winning the support of the Anarchist leadership in Barcelona, the possibility might have then matured to allow them to advocate and organize guerrilla warfare. But this possibility was never tested. By the time the Anarchist leaders interviewed by Ehrenburg in Barcelona in 1938 were deploring the failure of the government to make greater use of guerrilla warfare, they were already presumably too deeply preoccupied by their desperate political struggle with the Communists to sponsor such operations themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> The possibly interesting but historically irrelevant hypothetical question is: "If the Loyalists had chosen to sponsor agrarian guerrillas, would these have materialized?" The answer would be a "Yes, probably," judging from the fact that the Communists were able to do so in Spain in the middle 1940s under seemingly less favorable circumstances.

<sup>2</sup> Hobsbawm (59), 91.

As for Franco's Nationalists, we can grant that it would have been impossible for them to mobilize much less sustain widespread guerrilla warfare in Loyalist zones, even had they sought to do so, because the bulk of the peasantry--particularly in Catalonia, Aragon, and Andalusia--staunchly opposed the Rebels whose intentions they understood well enough.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, the Loyalists had the strong possibility of so mobilizing the existing rural revolutionary fervor. The final question remains of why the Loyalists did not attempt to exploit this possibility. The answer is complex but not elusive. It lies in the tangled internal politics of the Loyalist camp, particularly in the Soviet efforts to exploit and control the political divisions of the Republic. This question can be answered briefly, because the political and international aspects of the Civil War have been thoroughly and convincingly elucidated, particularly in the flurry of recent books.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The single region where the peasants came out in support of the Rebels was Navarre, according to Ehrenburg (63), 117. This small province of 400,000 population was characterized by Brenan (43), 95-97, as "the most conservative peasant society in Europe" as a consequence of its medieval family-community landownership system and monarchist political sympathies.

<sup>2</sup> Among the early writers, few besides Borkenau and Orwell grasped the problem. The most thorough recent study is Jackson (65), 276-292. The widely cited book by Thomas (61) is not reliable on this nor, indeed, on most anything.

My hypothesis--an inference rather than a directly documented fact--why the Republican Government did not exploit the clear and rewarding possibilities of full scale guerrilla war is that in order to do so they would have had to adopt a policy of social revolution in the countryside. Only such a policy could have mobilized the popular support necessary for guerrillaism. And only such a policy could have galvanized and utilized the extensive existing Socialist and, particularly, Anarchist peasant organizations to give effective leadership (under trained Loyalist and Soviet military advisers) to a general guerrilla revolt. But, the Republican Popular Front Government had already bitterly debated and emphatically rejected this very policy in the early months of the Civil War. The Popular Front coalition of Socialists and various left and center parties had--with the insistence of the Spanish Communists, the Comintern, and Stalinist Moscow--specifically decided to adopt a policy where pursuing the war as a conventional military struggle came first and foremost while the promised social revolution was placed in abeyance until victory. Only the Anarchists had the vision (or perhaps merely the sincerity of their avowed philosophy) to argue that the social revolution was itself the best guarantee of victory over the Rebel generals and their Nazi and Fascist allies. Indeed, the Anarchists were crushed in May 1937 for their persistent urging of such a policy. Thus a guerrilla war policy fell victim to an overriding political policy.



### C. The Moors

In researching this paper I was surprised to find that a second major and "obvious" source of potential revolt behind the Nationalist lines--the Moslem population of Spanish Morocco--was also very largely overlooked in the literature.

The eventually unsuccessful rebellion of the Moslem Rif tribesmen in the 1920's had not only been a major fact of Spanish political-military life but one that the best-selling memoir of American journalist Vincent Sheean had made the Rifs a household word throughout the world by the mid-1930's.<sup>1</sup>

The protracted and brutally costly rebellion of the Rifs was finally ended in 1926. The Rifs had, by threatening French interests in their own zone of Morocco, provoked the intervention of the French Army on the side of

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<sup>1</sup> For the Rif revolts see Vice-Admiral C. V. Usborne, The Conquest of Morocco (London: Paul, 1936); Douglas E. Ashford, Political Change in Morocco (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 27-29; and Vincent Sheean, Personal History (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1934), pp. 83-161. A singularly perceptive memoir by a Spanish Socialist who served as a non-commissioned officer against the Rif, is Arturo Barea, The Forging of a Rebel (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946), pp. 225-418. A Moroccan account is 'Alāī al-Fāsi, The Independence Movements of Arab North Africa (Washington, D. C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1954), pp. 94-105.

the Spaniards, thereby sealing the fate of the revolt which quickly ended in the exile of the remarkable Rif leader, Abd-el-Krim, to Reunion Island.

Still, the conflict had not been resolved--only muted. The Arabs of Spanish Morocco ached for vengeance against and freedom from Spain, but were restrained by the overlooming power and influence of France.<sup>1</sup>

The first overt move in the Spanish Civil War occurred in Spanish Morocco when the officers garrisoned there rose in rebellion on 17 July 1936. The following day General Franco arrived from his semi-exile in the Canary Islands to take command of the Army of Africa, the main military force at the command of the rebel generals.

From the first, the Caliph and the Grand Vizir sided with Franco,<sup>2</sup> but the main leaders of the Moroccan nationalist movement did not. The latter sought to capitalize on the civil war to gain independence for the Moors.

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Newman, I Saw Spain (London: James, 1937), p. 242. Newman, a British journalist in Morocco at the time of Franco's pronunciamiento in July 1936, also was the first writer to make the interesting comment that the Rif had come to like the Germans who had supplied them with clandestine arms during the Rif Wars. Newman implies that this favor for Weimar German industrialists may have somehow been transferred to Hitler's Wehrmacht during the Spanish Civil War.

<sup>2</sup> Robert A. Friedlander, "Holy Crusade or Unholy Alliance? Franco's 'National Revolution' and the Moors," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 44 (Mar 1964), pp. 347,348-349. Compare al-Fasi (54), 150, who asserts the Caliph had initially protested against the revolt. In any case, by 19 July, that is, two days after the uprising, the Grand Vizir had publicly sided with Franco.

Spanish Morocco served throughout the civil war as a major staging and training base for the insurgent generals.<sup>1</sup> But an even more important key to the successful Nationalist rebellion was the crack units of the Regulares (Moorish troops). Together with the Tercio (the Spanish Foreign Legion), they constituted the 32,000-man Army of Africa—General Franco's contribution to the generals' revolt when airlifted from Morocco to Spain by German Luftwaffe aviation, beginning on 28 July 1936. These Moors were probably decisive in the first month or two of the revolt; they were certainly of critical importance for the first six months; and the nearly 135,000 of them who served throughout the war constituted a major part of the Nationalist shock troops, snipers, and diversionists.

Consequently, any efforts to create civil unrest in Spanish Morocco, subvert the Moorish troops, or prevent their continuing recruitment should have been a high priority matter for the Republican Government. One of the intriguing aspects the Spanish Civil War is that no major Loyalist efforts were made to this end. The reasons are probably closely related to those that prevented the Loyalist Government from encouraging insurgency among the Spanish peasantry, particularly the unwillingness to encourage revolutionary activities. In addition, there was allegedly a fear that fomenting of tribal nationalism would bring about the active opposition of the French Government.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Alvarez del Vayo, Freedom's Battle (New York: Knopf, 1940), pp. 123-124.

Opportunities for encouraging revolt in the Spanish zone of Morocco seemed excellent. The massive revolt of the Rif tribes launched by Abd-el-Krim in 1920 proved by its near success and the fact that it was finally suppressed in 1926 only by the direct intervention of 200,000 French troops that Spanish Morocco was a potential mare's nest of tribal insurrection during the Spanish Civil War. Furthermore, the rival urban-based Moroccan Nationalist movement--that finally brought independence in 1956 and absorbed the Spanish zone over the subsequent two years--had grown gradually in organization, influence, and power since its founding in 1926. Peace had been maintained after 1926 by Spanish Governments--both dictatorship and Republican--only by playing off the various tribes, nationalist groups, and aristocrats against one another.<sup>1</sup>

1. Republican Political Maneuvers and Policies Toward the Moors

Curiously, not only did the Republican Government not take any initiative in exploiting Moroccan nationalism,<sup>2</sup> but they even rejected the overt Moroccan offers of support in return for political independence for Spanish Morocco.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ashford (61), 25-50.

<sup>2</sup> I have been unable to verify the implausible bare assertion by Associated Press Madrid correspondent Knoblaugh (37), 174, that Loyalist aircraft had dropped anti-Franco leaflets in Spanish Morocco sometime in 1936 or 1937.

<sup>3</sup> For the Loyalist-Moorish negotiations in general see John P. Halstead,

Even before the Spanish generals' declaration of rebellion, the Moroccan nationalists feared that such a military coup d'état would weaken the Moorish political position. Accordingly, with some intimation of the local aspects of the conspiracy, the Moorish nationalists had sent a delegation to Madrid to warn of this and to offer their support in exchange for self-government. However, the Spanish Republican leaders interpreted the warning as mere Moroccan nationalist agitation.<sup>1</sup>

Within weeks after the rebellion on 17-18 July 1936, a complicated series of interrelated negotiations occurred among the Moroccan nationalists, the Spanish Republican Government, the French Popular Front Government of Socialist Premier Blum, and Spanish Catalan leaders.

These meetings began in Geneva where Amir Shakib Arslan, a Pan-Arab leader, maintained an office. Arslan was approached in August by representatives of the Republican Government, presumably members of their regular mission to the League of Nations. Arslan advised the Spaniards to deal directly with the Moroccan nationalist leadership.<sup>2</sup>

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Rebirth of a Nation: The Origins and Rise of Moroccan Nationalism, 1912-1944 (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University, 1967), p. 238; al-Fāsi (54), 149-154; and Friedlander (64), 351-356. The account by Ashford (61), 48, is quite incoherent.

<sup>1</sup> Friedlander (64), 351; and al-Fāsi (54), 150.

<sup>2</sup> al-Fāsi (54), 150-151; and Friedlander (64), 351. Also Halstead (67), 238. Note that there is considerable confusion and inconsistency among the major sources over the sequence of these various meetings.

Accordingly, the main negotiations moved to Barcelona where Arslan, joined by Muhammad Hassan al-Wazzani (al-Ouezzani), and Omar Abdeljalil arrived in early September.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, in August, French Premier Léon Blum hastily sent a delegation of French Socialists and Communists to French Morocco to negotiate with Moroccan nationalists in Fez. Blum and the members of his leftist Popular Front government both wished to support their Spanish comrades against the rightist rebellion and feared the rebellion might encourage the pro-Franco French colons in North Africa to take fascist-type actions of their own. In any case, Blum's emissaries backed off from these negotiations in Fez when they belatedly learned of the ongoing meeting in Barcelona.<sup>2</sup> Although I would have thought Blum's delegation withdrew merely because the more direct negotiations in Spain were preferred, Professor Halstead asserts categorically that the Frenchmen did so "in fear that their position as negotiators would be compromised should the Spanish promise independence for the northern zone, and that they thereby missed another opportunity to work out an evolutionary solution."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Friedlander (64), 351; al-Fāsi (54), 151. Halstead (67), 238, alone asserts that these negotiations were held in Madrid, the then Republican capital, rather than Barcelona.

<sup>2</sup> Halstead (67), 238; al-Fāsi (54), 150. And noted in passing by Friedlander (64), 351.

<sup>3</sup> Halstead (67), 238, based seemingly on a Moroccan interview source.

The Moslem delegation--Arslan, al-Wazzani, and Abdeljalil--had been cordially welcomed in Barcelona sometime around mid-September and the negotiations begun in person by the new Socialist Premier, Francisco Largo Caballero. He was assisted by his Socialist Foreign Minister, Julio Álvarez del Vayo, and, later, by Carlos de Baraibar, a Socialist youth leader soon to become Undersecretary of War. In the midst of a deep political-military crisis where the very survival of the Republican state was in jeopardy, such a powerful delegation was clear proof that the Republican Government and Socialist Party gave high priority to this issue of Morocco.<sup>1</sup> In return for their promise of cooperation in the struggle against the rebel generals, the Moroccan nationalist delegation presented the same set of six strong conditions that they had earlier given the Spaniards in Geneva and the French in Fez:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) That the Spanish (Republican) Government declare the independence of the Khalīfīyah Zone (i.e. Spanish Morocco).
- (2) That both Spain and France guarantee that independence and sponsor the zone's membership in the League of Nations.
- (3) That Spain conclude with the Caliph of Spanish Morocco a treaty granting independence and regulating future cordial relations.
- (4) That Spain give the necessary military supplies for the new state.

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<sup>1</sup> Friedlander (64), 351; al-Fāsi (54), 151; Halstead (67), 238.

<sup>2</sup> al-Fāsi (54), 151.

- (5) That France take no action against such a military build-up in the new state.
- (6) That France expedite the more urgent, particularly political, reforms in French Morocco.

Although these Moroccan demands were quite "pushy," they were not wholly unreasonable, given the desperate state of Republican Spain, which had already lost Morocco to the insurgents. Nevertheless, neither Spain much less France accepted them. Throughout these negotiations, the Spanish Foreign Minister Álvarez del Vayo kept Blum and the French fully informed and the latter apprised the Spaniards of their negative reaction. Moreover, the French had consulted the views of General Noguès, their Resident-General in Morocco, who rejected the plan outright.<sup>1</sup>

During these negotiations, Abd-el-Ki'im sent a plea from his French exile to Largo Caballero to intervene with Blum to permit his return to Spanish Morocco to lead the Rif tribes against Franco.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Friedlander (64), 351-352; al-Fāsi (54), 151; and Halstead (67), 238.

<sup>2</sup> Or so it is asserted by Morrow (38/63), 51-52, 94.



In addition to bowing to the very negative French reaction to major reform in Spanish Morocco, the Loyalist Government was itself clearly reluctant to press such reform even though it was their best chance for recovering the zone and thereby striking a major--possibly even decisive--blow against their mortal enemies. However, Friedlander--through his anti-Loyalist bias and a faulty translation--grossly misinterprets Republican policy in asserting that the Republican leaders, particularly President Manuel Azaña, refused to relinquish the monarchical tradition of historical "rights" and civilizing "mission" in Morocco. Friedlander simply misquotes Azaña as declaring in his first public speech during the Civil War a hoary imperialist policy that: "Our country has undertaken for

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the Protectorate of Morocco immense sacrifices . . . [and was morally bound] to impose the rights of Spain on Morocco."<sup>1</sup>

As all too often, the Republican leaders suffered a failure of imagination. They rejected the Moroccan conditions outright and countered with a shabby offer to (1) strive for well-being of Morocco after victory against Franco and (2) pay 40 million pesetas to the Moroccan delegation "for publicity on behalf of Spanish democracy."<sup>2</sup> When Azana presented this counter-proposal, al-Wazzani was enraged and the Moroccans indignantly terminated negotiations.<sup>3</sup>

At that juncture, the Catalan separatist parties in Barcelona invited the disgruntled Moroccan delegation to negotiate with them. An agreement was quickly signed whereby the Catalan parties endorsed the complete independence of Morocco and provided for mutual cooperation and assistance between Morocco and Spain on the basis of equality. The Catalans promised that the Minister of the Catalan Government (the Generalidad) to Madrid would present and defend this agreement before the Central Republican Government. This last desperate effort failed and the Moroccan delegates returned to North Africa.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Manuel Azana, Obras Completas, Vol. 3 (Mexico: Oasis, 1967), pp. 331-332. I have quoted from Friedlander (64), 352, citing Speech by His Excellency, the President of the Spanish Republic: January 21, 1937 (London: Press Department Spanish Embassy, 1937), pp. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> al-Fāsi, (54), 151-152.

<sup>3</sup> al-Fāsi, (54), 151-152; Halstead (67), 238.

<sup>4</sup> al-Fāsi, (54), 152.

The blindness of Republican leaders to the opportunities for encouraging a general Moroccan rebellion seems well represented by Julio Álvarez del Vayo, the Socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs under Premiers Largo Caballero and Negrín. Even after the war this pro-Stalinist could still evade discussing this complex issue with the bare assertion that Franco's Moors were "immune from all political propaganda of a democratic nature."<sup>1</sup> This remark is untypical of his self-professed optimism, but quite characteristic of his frequent dissimulation. The point surely is not whether the Moroccans were susceptible to democratic or revolutionary propaganda but whether the Spanish Republicans were willing to jeopardize their colonial aspirations and risk antagonizing French interests by encouraging Moroccan nationalism, the one appeal to which the Moroccans certainly were not "immune."

Before the civil war was only three months old, Anarchist militants in Barcelona were urging the Government to turn Spanish Morocco from an enemy to an ally of the Republic.<sup>2</sup> For example, the distinguished Italian Anarchist intellectual then living in Spain, Professor Camillo Berneri proposed through his influential émigré newspaper that this be achieved by extending revolutionary agitation to Morocco.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (40), 124.

<sup>2</sup> V. Richards, Lessons of the Spanish Revolution (London: Freedom Press, 1953), pp. 21; and Felix Morrow, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1938), p. 169 (of the 1963 reprint).

<sup>3</sup> Camillo Berneri in Guerra di Classe, 24 Oct 1936, as quoted in Morrow

## 2. Nationalist Negotiations with the Moors

The Republican Government had, by September 1936, thrown away their main chance for winning over the Moors, making it quite easy for Franco to outbid them, a fine opportunity he was quick to grasp. He let neither principle nor prejudice deter him from dealing with the Moroccan nationalists. Franco had received his early military experience in the suppression of the Rif revolt and had also, it would seem, acquired some understanding of political realities in the area. In any case he was quick to promise political concessions to the Arab nationalists of Spanish Morocco in return for their help in maintaining calm and continued recruitment of "Moorish" troops among the tribes, of whom <sup>-135,000</sup> 50,000<sup>A</sup> passed into Franco's army during the course of the war.<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the Northern (i.e. Spanish Zone) Moroccan nationalists, Abdelkhalek Torrès, had been promptly arrested by Franco for having collaborated with the Popular Front government.<sup>2</sup> Torrès was now freed and courted by the Insurgents. Franco made vague promises of reform that the nationalists

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(38), 169-170. Professor Berneri was assassinated in Barcelona during the May riots in 1937. The gadfly had been silenced at an opportune moment, probably by the Communists who are surely responsible for the nearly absurd charge that he had been murdered by Mussolini's OVRA.

<sup>1</sup> For the Rebel-Moor negotiations see Halstead (67), 156-157, 238-239, 257; Ashford (61), 46, 48-50; al-Fāsi (54), 152; and Friedlander (64), 352-353,

<sup>2</sup> Halstead (67), 236-238; and Ashford (61), 49n. See also al-Fāsi (54), 150.

took as commitments to their independence.<sup>1</sup> And in October 1936, the eccentric Rebel leader in Seville, General Queipo de Llano, announced from Radio Tangier on behalf of Franco that the Nationalists were drafting a law to grant independence to Spanish Morocco.<sup>2</sup> Torrès accepted these promises at face value--at least they were better than Republican silence and rejection--and assured the annual congress of the Association of Moslem North African Students (A.E.M.N.A.) meeting in Tetuan that same month (October 1936) that Nationalist Spain was Morocco's greatest hope of freedom from the "Oppressors of North Africa." Thus Torrès collaborated with the Franco regime to the exclusion of the Moroccan nationalists of the French Zone who--to win French leftist support--henceforward agitated against both Franco and Torrès, a split that endured until the Istiqlal Party opened a branch office in Tetuan in 1947.<sup>3</sup> Franco's policy of vague promises, conciliation, and divide-and-rule was vigorously and successfully maintained by Franco's former adjutant, Colonel Juan Beigbeder, during his term in Spanish Morocco as High Commissioner, from 15 December 1936 until 10 August 1939, over four months after the collapse of Republican Spain.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Halstead (67), 156-157, 238.

<sup>2</sup> Halstead (67), 238, citing L'Afrique Française (Paris), October 1937 [sic], p. 456.

<sup>3</sup> Halstead (67), 238-239.

<sup>4</sup> Halstead (67), 257.

### 3. Ethnic Bias

One startlingly discrepant attitude of the Loyalists was their marked ethnic prejudice toward the Moors. This self-defeating prejudice was shared by the men of the Popular Front ranging from liberal democrats through shades of Socialists to flaming Communists. Indeed, their prejudice against their colonial subjects was, together with their bitter opposition to the Rebel generals, one of the few views they could agree on. This native prejudice quickly infected the international volunteers and foreign correspondents.

The noted Socialist painter, Luis Quintanilla, pictorially stereotyped the Regulares in much the same degrading way as he did the truly foreign enemies: the Germans and Italians. Some of the British volunteers called them "niggers" and lest this be misconstrued as the common British cliché for all non-whites one need only look at Loyalist war posters, showing jet-black, thick-lipped, hideously grinning, powerful, turbaned figures attacking defenseless white women and bayonetting white children.<sup>1</sup> The point is not that the Moors did not commit such atrocities--they did--but that they are stereotyped as Negroes. This falsehood--the Moors are Arabs and Berbers

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Keith Scott Watson, Single to Spain (London: Barker, 1937), p. 172; and H. Edward Knoblauch, Correspondent in Spain (London: Sheed & Ward, 1937), pp. 173-174. Also Luis Quintanilla, All the Brave (New York: Modern Age Books, 1939). For posters see Frank Jellinek, The Civil War in Spain (London: Gollancz, 1938).

and no more Negro than Shakespeare's Moor of Malta--effectively served to block any latent efforts to understand--and thus be in a position to exploit--the political, religious, or social problems of this remarkable group. Faced with such a popularly and officially sanctioned Loyalist norm throughout the civil war, it is perhaps not surprising that even New York Herald Tribune correspondent Vincent Sheean succumbed. Sheean quite forgot his recent experiences with the Rif Berbers whom he had vividly, movingly, and approvingly depicted in heroic revolt against Spanish colonialism. Even the presence of dozens of American Negro volunteers in the Lincoln Battalion (including its one-time commander, Captain Oliver Law) and the few visiting Negro celebrities--poet-journalist Nicolás Guillén--did nothing to alter this picture. At most, they were tolerated as "our" negroes, a false and ugly position that Hughes himself accepted without thought or question in interviewing Moorish prisoners.<sup>1</sup> Despite the identification, the few Loyalist Negroes apparently failed to recognize much less urge on the Government or Army that an opportunity may have existed to agitate among the Moors. In any case no such efforts were undertaken along lines parallel to those that the all-Italian Socialist-Communist Garibaldi Battalion directed in the trenches at Mussolini's Italian Fascist divisions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Langston Hughes, I Wonder as I Wander (New York: Rinehart, 1956), pp. 349-354.

<sup>2</sup> For the more-or-less successful efforts to demoralize Mussolini's Italian infantry divisions by front-line loudspeaker and leaflet barrages see Gustav Regler, The Owl of Minerva (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1960), pp. 304-310.

#### 4. The "Revolt in Tetuan"

Having failed to take practical steps to instigate insurgency in Spanish Morocco, the Loyalist Government did obtain a remarkable bonus through the imaginative efforts of its official foreign press agency, the Agence Espagne.<sup>1</sup> This curious disinformation office had been created and entirely controlled by the Comintern's superb West European propaganda mill directed from Paris by the brilliant German master of "front" group tactics, Willi Münzenberg. The main office, also in Paris, was managed by Münzenberg's lieutenant (and Comintern or NKVD watchdog), the strange Czech Communist, Otto Katz who was then widely known as "André Simone."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The London branch office, directed by Geoffrey Bing was known as the Spanish News Agency. All staff were trusted junior functionaries of the Comintern apparatus such as Arthur Koestler, Willy Forrest, Claud Cockburn, Mildred Bennett (formerly of the Moscow Daily News), and Jean Ross (Mrs. Cockburn). See Arthur Koestler, The Invisible Writing (New York: Macmillan, 1954), pp. 210, 335-336, 368; and Cockburn (58), 26; Delmer (61), 332, 338; Mora (39), 306; Cowles (41), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Otto Katz (alias O. K. Simon, alias André Simone). (Prague, 1893-1952) Author of numerous anonymous and pseudonymous propaganda books. Fluent in Czech, Russian, French, and English. Tried and hanged in Prague in 1952 as a British and Zionist agent. Koestler (54), 199-200, 209-212, 314-316, 323-324, 327-328, 332-335, 365 with photo opposite p. 210; Cockburn (58), 23-31, 167; Fischer (41), index and 460; Ehrenburg (63), index; Barea (46), 645, 649; and Theodore Draper, "The Man Who Wanted to Hang," Reporter, Vol. 8, No. 1 (6 Jan 1953), pp. 26-30.



When Agence Espagne correspondent in Spain Claud Cockburn arrived unexpectedly in Paris, fresh from Tangier and Gibraltar, Katz instructed him that he urgently wanted a detailed, eyewitness account of the great anti-Franco revolt that occurred the previous day in Tetuan, the news of which had been suppressed by Nationalist censorship.<sup>1</sup> Waving aside Cockburn's objection that he had not been in Tetuan and had not known of the revolt, Katz acknowledged that no such event had occurred. The point, he explained, was that something had to be done, and done immediately to induce Premier Blum to reopen the Catalan frontier so that waiting munitions could again flow to the Loyalists. A crucial Loyalist offensive was about to begin and these additional arms were desperately needed. Katz believed that such a story, by casting doubt on Franco's superior strength, would free Blum's hand of the restraining influence of those politically powerful factions who desired or at least believed in Franco's victory. Timing of the story was urgent, Katz further explained, because a delegation of Communist and Socialist deputies was to approach Blum the following morning and needed just such an event to sway Blum. Working from Katz's story line, Cockburn fabricated with loving care:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Claud Cockburn, Crossing the Line (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1958), pp. 27-29, 139. Curious additional details appear only in the American edition of his earlier volume of autobiography: Claud Cockburn, A Discard of Trumpets (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), pp. 305-309.

<sup>2</sup> Cockburn (58), 28-29. Cockburn is notably careless about his chronology. He says the offensive in question was the first battle of Teruel

one of the most factual, inspiring and yet sober pieces of war reporting I ever saw, and the night editors loved it. When the deputation saw Blum in the morning he had been reading it in newspaper after newspaper and appreciating its significance. He was receptive to the deputation's suggestions. The guns got through all right, and the Republicans won that battle.

Although Cockburn's implication that the highly principled, pro-Loyalist, Socialist Blum could have been swayed by such a crass consideration does not at all suit the Premier, the sequence of events is accurate and makes for a strong prima facie case that belief in such a revolt in Morocco would have strengthened Blum's political hand in advancing the policy to which he was already committed.<sup>1</sup>

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(which began on 15 Dec 1937). However Blum's first two premierships were from 4 Jun 1936-21 Jun 1937 and 13 Mar-8 Apr 1938. Moreover, Blum did reopen the frontier in mid-March 1938, in time to permit the Loyalist build-up for their Ebro offensive that began on July 24th. I suspect Cockburn has simply let an alliterative eye follow Tetuan with "Teruel" rather than "Ebro," which is probably meant.

<sup>1</sup> Joel Colton, Léon Blum (New York: Knopf, 1966), pp. 234-269, 299 and 300.

In sum, then, the successive Republican Governments failed to take any positive action to stimulate or encourage revolt behind the Nationalist lines. They did not seek to exacerbate much less play upon the ever-present deep animosities separating the peasants and proletarians from the Rebel elite. Nor did they even attempt to exploit the Moroccan nationalist or religious hatred of Spanish colonialism.

### III. ORGANIZING FOR GUERRILLA WAR

Not only did the Loyalist Government not foster guerrilla operations, but neither did this mode arise indigenously, except for scattered, brief instances. Professor Robert Colodny, an International Brigade veteran, being unaware of the NKVD rôle, made an honest error--and Spanish Politburo leader Lister a knowing one--in categorically ascribing spontaneity to the origin of guerrilla warfare behind the Rebel lines.<sup>1</sup> The only pre-NKVD cases in which commando groups and guerrilla bands arose indigenously were the Catalan militia column of Bayo and Uribarry that extended its operations beyond the then vaguely defined front and operated more-or-less independently of the Loyalist War Ministry, and some ad hoc bands of miners, dockers, and railwaymen that operated briefly in Asturias. The bands that subsequently arose behind the lines prove to have come into being in defensive response to the harsh Rebel retaliations against villages believed--often incorrectly--to have harbored deep-penetration NKVD commando raiders. The only other operations that took on semi-guerrilla characteristics were the occasional desperate last stands of isolated and embattled regular units such as that of Colonel Beltrán in Aragón in the summer of 1938. The only such last ditch

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<sup>1</sup> Colodny (58), 160, asserts that "guerrilla units . . . were formed spontaneously all over Spain" before the spring of 1937. Lister (65), 53, states that: "Guerrilla units came into existence spontaneously, and fought in Galicia, Leon, Zamora, Andalusia, Estremadura, Asturias and elsewhere."

stand that may fairly be said to have developed into a guerrilla resistance movement was that of the garrison that fled Gijón in late 1937 and managed a precarious survival in the mountains of Asturias until the end of the war. However, there are indications that even this latter group won the support of the countryfolk--and consequently their main chance of survival--precisely because of continuing harsh "reprisals" by Nationalist forces against the villagers suspected of succoring guerrillas. Although the social aspects of this desperate resistance in Asturias have not been recorded, I presume that the bitter anti-Army feelings engendered during the cruel suppression of the miners' revolt there only three years earlier insured the necessary popular support for the surrounded Loyalist militia units.

#### A. The NKVD Takes the Initiative

The primary reason why Spanish Civil War guerrilla organizations and activities have been so thinly documented, so little studied, and so incompletely understood is simply that they formed part of the most secret activities of the Soviet secret police, the NKVD. As such, they operated quite independently of the rest of the Soviet military-political aid mission, their chain of command passing directly to Moscow with only the most tenuous liaison with Soviet, much less Loyalist, headquarters in Spain. At least this was the situation until midway into the Civil War when, in late 1937, the regular guerrilla cadre were formally integrated as a corps in the Loyalist Army.

In Spain, as in Russia at that time, the NKVD had jurisdiction over all guerrilla operations<sup>1</sup> as well as of secret police activities and assassination assignments. The Spanish Civil War coincided with the period of the Great Purge in Russia that brought the NKVD to its peak of influence over all Party and Government organizations as well as its direct monopolization of many activities hitherto under the jurisdiction of the Red Army and Foreign Commissariat.

The Spanish Army officer's revolt against the Republican Government began on 17 July 1936. At the end of that month, German and Italian aid in men and matériel began arriving in Spain in rapidly increasing quantity and variety. Except for propaganda (and some military observers) Stalin's decision to render extensive Soviet aid did not come until early September.<sup>2</sup> NKVD Commissar Yagoda was then instructed to arrange the necessary details with an eye toward maximum secrecy. These details were worked out by him on 14 September at a meeting that also created a special NKVD branch in Spain under the direction of General Aleksandr Orlov<sup>3</sup> who arrived in Madrid

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Orlov, Handbook of Intelligence and Guerrilla Warfare (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), pp. 164, 168, 172-182.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed description of the foreign intervention and of the Soviet advisory group including the extensive NKVD rôle in Spain, 1936-1939, see my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965).

<sup>3</sup> W. G. Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1939), pp. 82-84, based on his conversation at the time with Slutsky who had been a participant at this conference. General

later that month to establish this office.<sup>1</sup> During November 1936 the NKVD Foreign Department (INO) Chief, Abram Slutsky, was in Spain to reorganize and enlarge Orlov's organization to enable it to cope with the full range of NKVD activities, staffing it with both NKVD specialists from Moscow and local Spanish Communists.<sup>2</sup> I presume it was at this time that Orlov's group received its guerrilla warfare mission.<sup>3</sup> For what it is worth, Hemingway--who as we shall see had been made privy to much information on these activities--states in his novel of the Spanish Civil War that "the first partizan groups had been formed" only after the Soviet military advisor group moved residence from the Palace Hotel to Gaylord's, an actual event that occurred sometime between 4 November 1936 when the Soviet Embassy formally transferred

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Krivitsky defected in Paris on 6 Oct 1937 and died in 1941 in Washington, D. C., almost certainly at the hands of NKVD operatives.

<sup>1</sup> Testimony of Aleksandr Orlov, U. S. Senate, Judiciary Committee, Internal Security Subcommittee, Hearing, 28 Sep 1955 (released 15 Nov 1962), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> W. G. Krivitsky, "Stalin's Hand in Spain," Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 211, No. 42 (15 Apr 1939), p. 119. These details of Slutsky's visit are spelled out more explicitly in General Krivitsky's article than in his subsequent book cited above. According to Hernández, Slutsky's alias in Spain was "Marcos." See Jesús Hernández Tomás, La Grande Trahison (Paris: Fasquelle, 1953), p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Krivitsky makes no mention of the guerrilla activities of this NKVD group but does give us the chronology of NKVD development, whereas Orlov specifies the guerrilla activities but is neglectful of dates.

to Valencia and March 1937 when the scattered Soviet personnel remaining in Madrid were all moved into the Palace Hotel.<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere in the same novel Hemingway refers in passing to a Russian expert in dynamiting. This character, "Kashkin," is described as having been originally in the lines at Irún, then at San Sebastian, later in "the abortive fighting toward Vitoria," thence to Madrid in January 1937, and only then as a guerrilla with "Jordan" behind the lines to Extremadura. Next he was with the guerrilla group of "Pablo" before "Jordan" joined, and finally--when wounded 10 days later in April 1937--killed by "Jordan" to prevent his capture.<sup>2</sup> Now, the chronological sequence here is interesting. In effect, it dates Soviet involvement in actual guerrilla work as beginning sometime between January and mid-March 1937. The actions at Irún and San Sebastian in the Basque provinces near the French frontier began in August 1936 and ended with the fall of Irún on 4 September and of San Sebastian on the 13th.<sup>3</sup> Although it is known that the French Communist Party aided the defenders by sending several French and Belgian comrades--including, by his own admission,

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1940), p. 237. See the section on "Communications" in my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965) for the residential moves of the Soviet control and communication centers.

<sup>2</sup> Hemingway (40), 20-21, 23, 29, 171, 231-232, 237, 250. See also my Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> For the historical events see Thomas (61), 249-252, 280, 344-345.



the senior French CP official, André Marty--it seems most unlikely that a Soviet Russian diversionist would have been included in such a group prior to Yagoda's planning conference of 14 September or indeed until after Slutsky's visit in November.

Direct supervision from Moscow of the Spanish guerrilla operations was in the hands of Aleksandr Shpigelglas, then Slutsky's Deputy Chief in the NKVD Foreign Department.<sup>1</sup> He personally monitored the cable traffic from his two "legal" Residents in Spain, located in Madrid and in Barcelona.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Shpigelglas took frequent trips to Spain through Paris, in connection with these as well as his other duties concerned with indirect arms shipments and assassinations of political defectors.<sup>3</sup>

Aleksandr Orlov was a veteran senior NKVD officer (with rank equivalent of brigadier general) in the Foreign Department.<sup>4</sup> Orlov's branch of INO/NKVD was made responsible for: (1) exercising general surveillance of all Soviet aid mission and International Brigade personnel, (2) infiltrating the Republican secret police, (3) planning and conduct of all ordered assassinations. In addition, Orlov was in charge of creating, training, and directing Spanish

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<sup>1</sup> For biographical notes on Shpigelglas and Slutsky see Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> Vladimir and Evdokia Petrov, Empire of Fear (New York: Praeger, 1956), p. 57, based on V. M. Petrov's recollections of his official conversations with Shpigelglas and cable monitoring of the latter's dispatches in Petrov's capacity as an NKVD cipher clerk at the time.

<sup>3</sup> Shpigelglas visited Paris in late 1936, end of May 1937, and late June-late Sep 1937.

<sup>4</sup> See biographical sketch in Appendix B.

guerrilla units. He operated in Spain both openly under his own name (in his cover capacity as a Secretary of Embassy) and covertly with the nom de guerre of "Lyova" until his defection in July 1938.<sup>1</sup> Orlov was the senior NKVD officer in Spain at the time; and, although he has evaded discussing his allegedly bloody part in the NKVD's assassinations of numerous other Spanish Loyalists and foreigners in Spain at that time,<sup>2</sup> his earlier revelations have generally found subsequent verification.

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<sup>1</sup> Fischer (41), 361, 383, 384. Louis Fischer first met Orlov at the Madrid Embassy in mid-September 1936. For a detailed and perhaps too sensational eyewitness account of Orlov's activities in Spain, see Jesus Hernandez, La Grande Trahison (Paris: Fasquelle éditeurs, 1953), pp. 54, 74-75, 78, 82, 89, 91-93, 98-99, 103, 105, 107, 109-112. Hernandez states that Orlov was also known in Spain as "Miguel." Krivitsky (39), 82, states that Orlov's real name was Nikolsky, "Orlov" being his nom de guerre in Spain, other pseudonyms being "Schwed" and "Lyova."

<sup>2</sup> Among the more prominent victims of NKVD secret political assassination in Spain were ex-Communist Andrés Nin, the POUM leader; Erwin Wolf, Trotsky's private secretary in Norway who volunteered for service in Spain; José Robles, Johns Hopkins Professor of Spanish who served as an interpreter with the Soviet mission; Mark Rein, socialist son of Russian Social Democratic exile leader Raphael Abramowitz; and Kurt Landau, the Austrian former Secretary of the Second International. It is often forgotten that political assassination was rampant in Spain during the entire period preceding and accompanying the Civil War, and that nearly all political factions operated their own secret police and terrorist squads. Assassination in Spain was a monopoly of neither the Spanish Communists nor of the Soviet NKVD. For a tentative effort to sort out these many private and official checas see my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965).

The initial step taken by the NKVD in developing partisan operations was their creation of two guerrilla warfare schools, in Madrid and in Benimamet (near Valencia), each with about 200 trainees. Four more NKVD guerrilla schools were later established, including one in Barcelona with nearly 600 trainees.<sup>1</sup>

Although it is not explicitly recorded how long the NKVD played its directing rôle in Spanish guerrilla operations, it seems likely that it did so at least until the end of the war. We do know that Eitingon and his subordinates remained at their headquarters in Barcelona until literally on the eve of its fall on 26 January 1939 and crossed into France in early February on their way back to Moscow.<sup>2</sup> It is not plausible that the NKVD would have given up their efforts to control the guerrilla warfare that we know did continue throughout the Civil War.

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<sup>1</sup> Orlov (63), 172; and Orlov testimony of 15 Feb 1957, p. 3458.

<sup>2</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 231, mentions joining "Kotov" (i.e. Eitingon) near Gerona on 30 Jan 1939 during the latter's escape from Barcelona to France. Although London Daily Herald correspondent Scott-Watson did not know his name, he describes and characterizes Eitingon unmistakably as fleeing Barcelona on 25 January and again on 8 February at the French frontier. Keith Scott-Watson, "Escape from Disaster," in Frank C. Hanighen (editor), Nothing But Danger (New York: McBride, 1939), pp. 254, 282.

## B. Recruits

As noted, the training capacity of the NKVD's six guerrilla warfare schools was over a thousand men. Candidates were recruited mainly among Spanish regulars but included some Germans and Britons, three Americans,<sup>1</sup> at least two Finns<sup>2</sup>--and possibly one Canadian--all from the International Brigades--plus some 80 former Czarist officers who hoped by this service to regain their Russian citizenship.<sup>3</sup>

Some--perhaps all--of the recruits from the International Brigades were assigned to a special unit of the 14th Guerrilla Corps designated the International Diversionary-Partisan Section.<sup>4</sup> Recruitment of these men began sometime in early 1937 when an official (Army?) order directed each battalion to nominate men for the guerrilleros. A special commission sitting in Madrid interviewed those of the nominees who had volunteered and selected 22.<sup>5</sup> One, an Asturian miner called "El Fantastico" in the Spanish company of the Lincoln Battalion was designated to command this group and the group itself selected the American, Irving Goff, as executive officer.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Landis (67), 135. Compare Bessie (65), 103, who asserts there were four American guerrillas. Landis' figure is by far the more authoritative.

<sup>2</sup> Landis (67), 347.

<sup>3</sup> Orlov (63), 172; and Orlov testimony of 15 Feb 1957, p. 3458.

<sup>4</sup> Michał Bron and others, Wojna Hiszpańska, 1936-1939 (Warsaw: Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1964), p. 485.

<sup>5</sup> Steve Nelson, The Volunteers (New York: Masses & Mainstream, 1953), pp. 133-134.

<sup>6</sup> Nelson (53), 134-135.

The three American recruits were all drawn from the International Brigade. The two who survived subsequently served with the OSS in Italy working under Milton Wolff (their former Commander in the Lincoln Battalion in Spain) and coordinating with the Italian partisans through Luigi Longo who as "Gallo" had been Political Commissar of the International Brigades and since 1964 has been Secretary-General of the Italian Communist Party.<sup>1</sup>

Although more than two thousand men served in the Guerrilla Corps, only one--Soviet Colonel Starinov--has published a memoir. Hence we have little detailed knowledge of their background, training, or experiences. Aside from a handful of their Russian officers, only a half dozen or so are known by name or description. These are mentioned below.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alvah Bessie, Inquisition in Eden (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 103, 132-134.

<sup>2</sup> And see Appendix B for more detailed biographical sketches and references.

One of the known German guerrillas was Victor Priess. Enlisted in the International Brigades in late 1936, he was soon assigned to a guerrilla unit attached to the Internationals because of his previous experience in German Communist underground combat with Nazi SA and SS squads. He spent the remainder of the war operating behind the Nationalist lines, "destroying bridges, raiding enemy headquarters, blowing up ammunition dumps." Despite a price on his head Priess managed to evade capture, his guerrilla career ending only with the dissolution of the International Brigades in November 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Spanish Communists also were attached to the NKVD's 14th Guerrilla Corps. Indeed they formed the majority of its personnel. However, only three have been fully identified by name. The subsequently most notorious was Ramón Mercader, a 24-year old Communist who was transferred to the NKVD from his post as a political commissar in the Communist-dominated 27th Division in Catalonia.<sup>2</sup> He was trained at the guerrilla school in Barcelona in 1937, and later while on a raid across the lines on the Aragón front was wounded in the elbow. After recovery he became Commandant of the Soviet

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Scholmer, Vorkuta (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), pp. 160, 162-164.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the Loyalist divisions were originated and directed by a particular political party. According to Ibarruri (63), 341, the 27th Division was one of those associated with the Partido Socialista Unificado de Cataluña (PSUC). The PSUC was a Communist-dominated fusion party of Communists and left-wing Socialists.

barracks headquarters in Barcelona (possibly the location of the training school itself) until sent to Moscow in December 1937. There he received the additional NKVD training that prepared him for his subsequent successful infiltration of Trotsky's residence in Mexico. There in 1940 while posing as a Belgian aristocrat but under the direction of his former chief in Spain, Eitingon, he assassinated Trotsky with an ice-axe.

Only three Americans served as guerrillas.<sup>1</sup> All were apparently recruited from the Abraham Lincoln Battalion of the XVth International Brigade; and at least two were Communists. Three remain anonymous, but some biographical details are known. One was a thin, wiry former organizer for the Young Communist League. A friend of the first was a tall, wide, powerfully built man who had been an organizer for the United Electrical and Machine Workers Union and a professional adagio dancer.<sup>2</sup> A third was the "diamond-hard little East Side New York Jew" whose death while dynamiting a bridge was immortalized by Ernest Hemingway in his For Whom the Bell Tolls.<sup>3</sup> The fourth was a young, exceptionally strong, former acrobat of Spanish descent from Brooklyn who was serving as an officer in the Lincoln Battalion in mid-1937

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<sup>1</sup> At least, this is the claim of Bessie (65), 103.

<sup>2</sup> During WWII both men served in the OSS in Italy under Milton Wolff, the last CO of the Lincoln Battalion. After the war both returned to their respective jobs for the CPUSA and UEMWU. Bessie (65), 132-135.

<sup>3</sup> Machlin (62), 148.

when taken by his Spanish comrade, "El Fantastico," into the guerrillas. After training, he served with "El Fantastico's" group on behind-the-line missions in the south. He is probably the Irving Goff whom Machlin describes as a tough, dark, small, American circus acrobat befriended by Hemingway in Madrid in 1937.<sup>1</sup> A possible fifth American guerrilla is Goff's friend, Bill Aalto, a Brooklyn Finn, who with Goff regaled Hemingway with the bridge-blowing tale that the novelist made the central event in his *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.<sup>2</sup>

The careers of these men tend to verify the almost certain fact that--as in Russia--only the more politically reliable were eligible for work with the NKVD. Even the volunteers in the International Brigades were all individually screened for "loyalty" and many quietly liquidated for often the most casual suspicions by their political commissars or the NKVD overseers.<sup>3</sup> Presumably the Spaniards were recruited mainly among the hard-core Communist units of Modesto, Lister, and "El Campesino," although there is no direct evidence of this.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> Machlin (62), 148, whose account makes it seem that only the anonymous East Side Jew was a guerrilla, Goff and Aalto being left with the Internationals. However, as Goff fits the description of Steve Nelson's "Comrade Yank" whom Nelson identifies as a guerrilla, I suspect Aalto was one also.

<sup>3</sup> For the behind-the-scenes role of the NKVD in the International Brigades see Krivitsky (39), 83, 93-95; and Fischer (41), 401.



The NKVD staff in Spain was apparently composed of Russians. In addition to Orlov, at least <sup>one</sup> other member of this staff--a subordinate of Eitingon, at least in later assignments--defected to the West and may be available to interviewers.<sup>1</sup>

The current Soviet efforts at re-examining some of the history of the period of Stalin's dictatorship through the publication of increasingly outspoken memoirs had by mid-1964 extended to the topic of the "silent front" of espionage. This trend has continued into the post-Khrushchev era, recently producing a reportedly frank memoir of guerrilla operations in Spain and early World War II by Colonel Ilya Grigorievich Starinov.<sup>2</sup> Starinov was a Soviet military engineer specializing in partisan warfare and behind-the-lines sabotage. Under the noms de guerre of "Comrade Rudolph" and "Wolf" the then Major Starinov was sent to Spain in late 1936 to assist in the organization and training of Spanish guerrilla groups and leading them in various sections of Nationalist Spain including Villanueva de Córdoba in the Sierra Morena of Andalusia until his recall to Russia in November 1937.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During WWII this anonymous officer served with the 4th Partisan Administration. In 1945 he was assigned to deep cover work in an East European satellite. He defected to the CIA on 11 Apr 1954 while serving (in Vienna?) with MVD 9th Section (terrorism and assassination.) Although he has not even yet been "surfaced" (i.e. brought before the public) he should be accessible, if still living. Nikolai Khokhlov, In the Name of Conscience (New York: McKay, 1959), pp. 311-313, 325-326.

<sup>2</sup> I. G. Starinov, Minu Zhdut Svoego Chasa [Mines await their hour] (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1964). This book has been enthusiastically reviewed in the Soviet press. I have been unable to obtain a copy.

<sup>3</sup> Review of Starinov's book by Soviet writer Yulian Semenov in

### C. The 14th Guerrilla Corps

Unfortunately, there are no published accounts of how the regular Loyalist guerrilla units were organized prior to 1938. That is, we know neither their own command structure nor how it was linked to the organizational chart of the Republican Army. We know only that they initially (that is, by early 1937) worked in squads of seven to nine men, sent across the lines at night for each specific, limited mission--usually of a sabotage nature--and would then return to base the next night for further assignment.<sup>1</sup> John Gates, International Brigade veteran and recently disillusioned Editor of the Communist New York Daily Worker, judges this joint operation of guerrilla raiders and regular units to be one of the more useful tactical innovations developed by the Loyalists.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever its earlier organization, in late 1937 (by December) the regular guerrilla force was reorganized and designated the 14th Guerrilla Corps, or more correctly, the 14th Corps (Guerrilla). As such it was merely the 14th of the Loyalist Army's 23 corps, all of which were--with disregard for security--numbered consecutively from one to twenty-three.<sup>3</sup>

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Moskovskaya Pravda, 14 Feb 1965, as available in complete English translation in Survey of the Soviet Press, No. 397, pp. 3-4.

<sup>1</sup> Orlov (63), 173.

<sup>2</sup> John Gates, The Story of an American Communist (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1958), p. 52. Gates served in Spain from Feb 1937 until Dec 1938. He resigned from the CPUSA in 1958 and briefly took up graduate study in economics at M.I.T.

<sup>3</sup> Lister (65), 53; and Bron (64), 485, who calls it the XIV Partisan Corps.

The 14th Guerrilla Corps was unique in that it was not attached to any of the several specific Army or Army Group headquarters.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, I presume it must have been directly subordinated to the General Staff, whose Chief of Staff was General Vincente Rojo.

The Corps was composed of four "divisions," but its unique nature was further demonstrated by the fact that its total strength was only 2,000 men,<sup>2</sup> an unusually small number for even an understrength Loyalist corps.

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<sup>1</sup> Bron (64). Annexes 20 and 21.

<sup>2</sup> Landis (67), 349, based on his 1963 interview with Lt. Irving Goff.

#### D. Guerrilla Communications

The Soviet-directed partisan headquarters were located behind the lines in Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona where the NKVD resident directors were situated. From these safe and convenient centers of recruitment, training, planning, and direction the guerrilla teams were assigned to field commanders for their use in short-range line-crossing or were directly dispatched by the NKVD on long-range penetration missions.

In his often historically authentic novel,<sup>1</sup> Hemingway describes the plight of his protagonist, "Robert Jordan," when on a three-day bridge-blowing mission in late May 1937, <sup>Jordan</sup> wished to send vital intelligence of a decisive Nationalist deployment back to his divisional commander, "General Golz." He is forced to spare a needed man from the small local guerrilla band he is working with to act as a courier. However, the message never gets through because the courier is intercepted by André Marty, the chief of the International Brigades. Marty suppresses the message in his insane suspicion of its authenticity fostered by his desire to destroy "Golz." Meanwhile, uncertain of the success of his courier, "Jordan" observes wistfully that: "We should have portable short-wave sets, though. We will, in time. But we haven't yet."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the previously mentioned guerrilla, Victor Priess, has vouched for the authenticity of the guerrilla incidents that he had read in For Whom the Bell Tolls. Scholmer (54), 163. I have given monographic treatment to this question of his historicity of The Bell in my Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1967).

<sup>2</sup> Hemingway (40), 432.

This incident probably is a correct depiction of a serious hindrance to guerrilla operations in early 1937.<sup>1</sup> In any case, "Jordan"'s prediction that transceivers would be forthcoming was apparently correct, because General Orlov mentions in passing that at least one long-range penetration mission to Extremadura sometime before the spring of 1938 carried a transceiver that it used to direct airdrops of supplies to the large guerrilla band it was working with. Even after the withdrawal of the NKVD officers, these guerrillas continued to communicate, apparently by this same transceiver, with the guerrilla headquarters in Loyalis Spain.<sup>2</sup>

The coordination of Soviet aviation with NKVD-directed guerrilla operations was apparently a general feasibility when required. In addition to the above example, Soviet planes were used in late 1937 to evacuate General Gorev from the partisan redoubt below Gijón.<sup>3</sup> These examples of close air-support missions for ground operations are doubly remarkable because such cooperation was not rendered to regular ground forces. This suggests a fairly close liaison, or perhaps even a direct command-net link, within Spain between the NKVD and the Soviet military mission that is not otherwise known

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<sup>1</sup> It is not certain how much of this operation is history and how much fiction. The separate personalities--"Jordan," "Golz," Marty--are real. So are the incidents: "Jordan" killed on a bridge operation, "Golz" directing an unsuccessful offensive by the 35th Division in May 1937, Marty as a wrecker of men and strategies because of his pathological suspiciousness. What is uncertain is the degree to which Hemingway's separate facts were actually interconnected.

<sup>2</sup> This is the mission headed by Major Strik described in greater detail below. Orlov (63), 176-178.

<sup>3</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 147.

to have existed. Such secret coordination would have been feasible because the Loyalist Air Ministry itself was closely controlled by the Spanish Communists and the Soviet military advisory mission's aviation staff planned and directed the operations of the entire Loyalist Air Force without interference from the nominal Spanish military and ministerial chiefs. After November 1936 the de facto commander of the Loyalist Air Force was a Soviet general of aviation, initially Yakov Smushkevich (under the nom de guerre of "General Douglas") who subsequently served as Chief of the Red Air Force until executed a fortnight before the Nazi invasion. Except for the two small groups, Escadre España founded by André Malraux and the Red Wings Squadron, with foreign volunteer mercenary pilots and using obsolete aircraft, the bulk of the planes (90 per cent), pilots (1,000), crews, ground-crews, and airfields were Soviet.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> By April 1937, 90 per cent of all Loyalist aircraft were Soviet. However, by that July, enough of the 2,000 Spaniards being trained in Russia as pilots and crews had returned to replace the Russians on half the fighters and all bombers. See my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965).

#### IV. GUERRILLA OPERATIONS

The chapter will describe in some detail the specific guerrilla operations during the Spanish Civil War. As all instances known to me are included, this chapter constitutes a preliminary casebook-checklist.

The cases are divided by their geographical occurrence and also presented in rough chronological order. As all major findings, insights, and generalizations are repeated in other chapters, the non-specialist may wish to skip to the next chapter.

#### A. Operations in Andalusia

If we can trust the covert Communist propaganda of Claud Cockburn, the London News Chronicle's war correspondent, the advance of Franco's Army of Africa provoked apparently the first more-or-less true guerrilla operation in the early weeks of the rebellion. Around early August 1936 the small (400-population) Andalusian town of Villafranca was threatened by a strong column of Moorish troops and Legionnaires commanded by Captain Perez Munios. The local peasant leader, realizing it would not be possible to defend his village from this column, ordered all able-bodied men into the nearby mountains to conduct guerrilla warfare. The 103 persons who remained behind were all killed before the village was reoccupied a few days later by Loyalist silver-miners from Peñarroya.<sup>1</sup>

Although guerrilla operations seldom received specific publicity, one spectacular raid on the Rebel-held fortress of Corchuna in Andalusia on 23 May 1938 did at least receive a short piece in the official newspaper of the English-speaking units of the International Brigades.<sup>2</sup> In this

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Pitcairn [pseud. of Claud Cockburn], Reporter in Spain (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1936), pp. 87-88. This book was secretly commissioned by Harry Pollitt, the Secretary-General of the British Communist Party. On Pollitt's order, Cockburn, a covert Party member, wrote this 141-page book within a week. See Cockburn's autobiography, In Time of Trouble (London: Hart-Davis, 1956), p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 2, No. 21, p. 3, as reprinted in Landis (67), 490.



operation, a small detachment of Loyalist Army guerrillas--including the American lieutenants Irving Goff and William Aalto--from the 14th Guerrilla Corps was landed at a secluded coastal beach behind the Insurgent lines. There they were joined by a group of local partisans. Together they began their secret approach on their target, the Rebel fort of Corchuna. A handful of the guerrillas--including Goff and Aalto--gained entry to the fort by pretending to be the relief guard. In a brief but "rough and bloody" struggle the Rebel officers had been killed and the garrison surrendered. The guerrillas then released the 308 Asturian prisoners--mostly miners--who had been used by the Rebels to build fortifications. The main guerrilla force and the Asturians then escaped by crossing at a prearrange point of the front, while the rearguard--Aalto and Goff and a handful of guerrillas--made a hairbreadth fighting escape across lines along the Malaga-Motril road after the failure of their attempted rendezvous with the boats.

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<sup>1</sup> Landis (67), 490, citing 1963 interview with Goff.

B. Commandos and Guerrillas at the Madrid Front

The famed young Spanish Socialist painter, Luis Quintanilla, twice led a Socialist Militia column into the Sierra Guadarrama in August 1936 to repel a Moorish force of some 1,500 who had just advanced to the village of Peguerinos. On one of these occasions he led his unit on a quick, foray down the pass several miles into enemy territory to Balsaín where they blew up the power plant.<sup>1</sup>

In early October 1936, Nationalist columns advancing north toward Madrid found their extended lines of communications and assembly points harassed by the successful "guerrilla" columns of Captain Alberto Bayo<sup>2</sup> and Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Uribarry<sup>3</sup> operating in the mountains south of the Tagus. Former top-ranking Nationalist SIM officer, Lieutenant Colonel López

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B for biographical sketch.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix B for biographical sketch.

<sup>3</sup> Manuel Uribarry (or Vincente Uríbarri?). Militant Socialist. Originally a Captain in the Guardia Civil. Accompanied Bayo on amphibious invasion of Ibiza in early Aug 1936. Commanded Loyalist Valencian militia unit at Central Front, late Aug-late Dec 1936. Director of SIM (Loyalist secret police) on Madrid Front, 1937- ? . Broué and Témime (61), index; Koltzov (38/63), diary entries for 3 and 28 Nov 1936. Colodny (58), 24, 160, 200, where he is twice miscalled "Ibarruri"! On his SIM appointment see Hernandez (53), 102. For a semi-official account by one of his subordinates see Fernando "Homitio" Llovera, La Columna Uribarry (Valencia: Turia, 1937).

Muñiz has reportedly stated that Bayo and Uribarry were then even "threatening an attack against Toledo . . . and had already begun their dynamiting tactics at which they later became experts"<sup>1</sup> Colodny also speaks of Uribarry's "veteran guerrilla units" participating in a diversionary attack on Talavera de la Reina on 24 November 1936.<sup>2</sup> Despite their general characterization as "guerrillas," the Bayo-Uribarry columns were conventional militia units. Although they did imaginatively exploit the temporarily fluid front to employ aggressive guerrilla-type tactics, they are probably best described as "commandos" rather than guerrillas. However, judging from Fischer, they do appear to have provided the example that such tactics could succeed in Spain.

The former Spanish Communist general, "El Campesino," records that his first brigade was formed in (November?) 1936 with two companies of guerrillas attached to its six battalions of regular infantry.<sup>3</sup> Although

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas (61), 292, and Colodny (58), 160, both citing Colonel José López Muñiz, La Batalla de Madrid (Madrid: Editorial Gloria, 1943), pp. 3, 5, who at the time of writing his book was a professor in the Escuela Superior del Ejército.

<sup>2</sup> Colodny (58), 200.

<sup>3</sup> Valentín Gonzalez and Julian Gorkin, El Campesino: Life and Death in Soviet Russia (New York: Putnam's, 1952), p. 21. By the time of its service at the Battle of Brunete (Jul 1937) this group had grown to become the 46th "Campesino" Assault Division. Thomas (61), 460. There are, however, no indications whether it continued to incorporate guerrilla units.

the term "guerrilla" is often applied to "El Campesino's" entire command, this is an error arising--I think--from a combination of his rough reputation and his aggressive use of night tactics and not through any specific knowledge of his order of battle.<sup>1</sup> This error was made at the time by Pravda correspondent Mikhail Koltsov in his subsequently published diary: "Campesino's guerrilla battalion has arrived--bold, dare-devil fellows, who have been fighting for months on the Guadarrama front. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example Colodny (58), 70, 132, 142, 187, speaks of the "battalion of 'El Campesino's' peasant guerrillas" as early as Nov 1936 and of his "veteran guerrilla battalions" as late as Mar 1937. Similarly Thomas (61), 242, miscasts "El Campesino" as "a brilliant guerrilla leader." And Broué and Témime (61), 288, refer to "les guerilleros du Campesino" conducting a house by house defense of the Madrid suburbs in early Nov 1936. For probably similar reasons, other authors occasionally refer incorrectly to Loyalist militia units as "guerrillas." For example, Orwell (52), 10, uses the term in passing in describing the Catalan Anarchist militia unit in which he served, a unit whose operations--by his own account--were entirely limited to static trench warfare. It is also incorrectly applied by the British Anarchist Richards (53), 131n, 145n, to the Spanish Anarchist militia leaders, Durutti and Jover. Similarly, Cowles (41), 38-39, applies it to the Madrileño militia battalion of "El Guerrero" (the Warrior) that during the winter of 1936-37 successfully blocked a pass in the Sierra Guadarramas front northwest of Madrid.

<sup>2</sup> Koltsov (38), diary entry of 9/11/36. Colodny explicitly acknowledges this passage. Thomas and also Broué and Témime probably had Colodny<sup>in</sup> mind as they have made general use of him. Interestingly, the 1957 Moscow reissue expurgates El Campesino's name; he was then still an "unperson" in those early days of de-Stalinization. This and other similar deletions are thus also found in the Spanish translation published in Paris in 1963 but unfortunately based on the defective 1957 edition. So far, only Colodny has used the original edition of Koltsov.

A Soviet guerrilla, or at least an expert in demolitions, who operated on the Madrid front in the very early months of the war, was one "Santi,"<sup>1</sup> variously described as a "Macedonian" (by Koltsov) and a "Circassian" (by Louis Fischer.) Originally on Soviet General Gorev's staff at Miaja's Madrid headquarters, on 7 November 1936, he was assigned the task of mining all bridges and bridge approaches leading into Madrid in front of the advancing Rebel columns. This assignment was undertaken, according to Koltsov, in compliance with the orders of Miaja's Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Colonel (later General) Rojo.<sup>2</sup> When the 3,000-man column of Anarchists led by Durruti arrived in Madrid from the Aragon Front on 14 November, "Santi" was briefly assigned to him as his adviser.<sup>3</sup> On 24 November "Santi" reportedly participated in a motorized raid on the Rebel base and airfield at Talavera

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<sup>1</sup> Koltsov (38), diary entry of 7/11/36. The fact that this reference to his nationality is deleted from the 1957 Moscow reprint suggests this may have been a security euphemism to conceal his Soviet identity. Fischer (41), 395, mentions him only as "a tall Circassian officer of Russia's Red Army" serving as Durruti's aide when Fischer met him at Gorev's headquarters in Madrid on 16 November 1936. See also Thomas (61), 327.

<sup>2</sup> Vincente Rojo (b. 1894) is silent on this point in his postwar accounts. In 1958 he returned to Spain from Argentinian exile after receiving a suspended sentence.

<sup>3</sup> Koltsov (38/63), 14/11/36. Buenaventura Durruti, the violent and controversial Spanish Anarchist was killed by a stray bullet (or possibly by a disgruntled fellow-Anarchist) after a few days in combat, on 21 November 1936.

de la Reina.<sup>1</sup> Ehrenburg mentions "Santi" only as one of the Soviet "military advisers" in Spain.<sup>2</sup>

A fictional vignette of a diversionary raid--to capture rebel prisoners--is given by Hemingway in his only play, The Fifth Column. Written in Madrid late in 1937, the play depicts the war at that stage, specifically in mid-October. The scene is of a successful nighttime raid on a Rebel artillery observation post outside Madrid on the Extremadura Road. The Loyalist commandos--both connected with "counter-intelligence"--are an American anti-Fascist and a German Communist. Although Hemingway was well informed about Soviet activities in Spain, his play is too vague in identifying details to have value for the historian, beyond recreating some of the violence, boredom, frustration, and melodrama of the time. The raid scene is not realistic although--as usual with Hemingway--based on a real incident.<sup>3</sup>

According to the official newspaper of the English-speaking units of the International Brigades, preparations for the brief but successful Loyalist

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<sup>1</sup> Colodry (58), 200. See also Harold Cardozo, The March of a Nation (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1937), pp. 200-208, for a description as viewed from the Rebel side.

<sup>2</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 122, who gives his nom de guerre as "Xanti."

<sup>3</sup> Ernest Hemingway, The Fifth Column and the First Forty-nine Stories (New York: Scribner's, 1938), Act 3, Scene 2 (pp. 81-87). The play also mentions (p. 63) the singing of a song called "The Partizan," which is, I presume, the popular Soviet song of the same title that dates back to the Russian Revolution.

offensive that took Brunete on 6 July 1937 involved immediately preceding guerrilla raids. These raids achieved their objective of cutting the Rebel rail lines between their supply bases and the Madrid Front and keeping these lines closed for over two days of the offensive.<sup>1</sup>

By the summer of 1937, the NKVD guerrilla operations had enlarged to raids by up to 50-man platoons and, soon, due to harsh Nationalist reprisals against local peasants whom they thought--quite incorrectly at first--were aiding the Republican guerrillas, led to establishment of home-grown partisan bands that the NKVD was quick to support with instructors, small-arms, and Nationalist currency. This pattern of provoking indigenous partisan activity, which could then be taken under NKVD control, was then effectively spread throughout the country by sending the usual small squads on unusually deep penetration raids. All such groups concentrated on disrupting Nationalist lines of communications.<sup>2</sup>

The official English-language newspaper of the International Brigades carried a dispatch in October 1937 claiming that "many thousands" of Republican guerrillas were "harrassing the Fascist garrisons" throughout most of

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<sup>1</sup> The Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 1, No. 8 (Madrid: 18 Jul 1937), p. 4. Although all official news releases in Spain were notoriously deceitful, this particular case seems authentic, being typical of such operations at that time.

<sup>2</sup> Orlov (63), 175-177. Hemingway (40), 162, astutely recognized that:

In all the work that they, the partizans did, they brought added danger and bad luck to the people that sheltered them and worked with them.

Nationalist Spain: in the mountains of Huelva, in the South, and in the northwestern provinces of Galicia. Specific examples were given of 3,000 guerrillas from Viana del Bolla (in Orense) conducting diversionary raids against the Nationalist headquarters at Vigo and Pontavedra, killing nearly half of a company of Moorish and Falangist troops sent against them; 2,000 guerrillas--mostly refugees from Malaga, Río Tinto, and Seville--successfully holding out against Nationalist patrols in the mountains of Buama; numerous bands--refugees from Malaga--distributed among the villages of Malaga Province, frequently attacking the Nationalist garrison at Chorro del Agua and, in one attack on Ardales, capturing 20 cases of dynamite, 410 rifles, many horses, and wounding 50 Rebel troops.<sup>1</sup>

Other guerrilla units began operations against Nationalist airfields. One particularly successful group, which operated in 1937, was led by an outstanding Soviet NKVD guerrilla warfare operator, a Captain Nikolayevsky, who was eventually killed on such a raid by the premature detonation of one of his own hand grenades.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Loyalist Guerrilla Bands Menace Franco's Rear," Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 1, No. 17 (Madrid: 4 Oct 1937), p. 5. As this dispatch was datelined Valencia, it presumably originated with the Loyalist Propaganda Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> Orlov (63), 178-180. Nikolayevsky may have thus been one of the victims of the successful efforts of German Army intelligence (Abwehr) to introduce shipments of defective arms into Loyalist supply channels, on Göring's instructions. Admiral Canaris, the Abwehr chief, used a German commercial arms dealer to buy up obsolete arms. He then got SS armorers to



### C. Operations in Extremadura

Loyalist guerrillas were particularly active in the Extremadura mining and cattle-grazing region adjoining the Portuguese border. This was one of the early sections of the country seized by the Nationalists, having been slowly taken during the first fall and winter of the conflict.

Guerrilla units attached to the Republican Army were conducting deep penetration raids into Extremadura at least as early as the end of March 1937 when Constanca de la Mora visited the base headquarters at Andújar, located some 75 miles behind the front in Extremadura. There she was told by the waiters at the hotel that meat was readily available only in that town "because our guerrilleros go into the Extremadura and bring back cattle."<sup>1</sup>

Some interesting confirmation that these early guerrillas in Extremadura were part of the Soviet-controlled operation comes in fictional guise from

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render them defective: filing firing pins on rifles, adulterating the ammunition, and inserting instantaneous fuses on grenades. These arms were then distributed among those international arms dealers known to be selling to the Loyalists. Ian Colvin, Chief of Intelligence (London: Gollanez, 1951), pp. 33-34, quoting his postwar interview with Richard Protze, Canaris' former Chief of Counterintelligence (Abwehr IIIF). A further irony may lie in the possibility that the German businessman in question--Joseph Veltjens--may be the Hamburg export director that Red Army military intelligence (GRU) thought it had bribed. Krivitsky (39), 87.

<sup>1</sup> Constanca de la Mora, In Place of Splendor (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1939), p. 310. Señora Mora, then the Communist Deputy Chief of the Foreign Press Section in Valencia, was accompanied on this tour of the front by Richard Mowrer of the Chicago Daily News and Jean Ross, attached to the Loyalist news agency in Paris and London and wife of leading British Communist journalist Claud Cockburn.

the well informed Hemingway. Writing his For Whom the Bell Tolls after the war, he refers several times to a behind-the-lines train-blowing commando mission there conducted in mid-March 1937 by his American protagonist, "Robert Jordan," and Jordan's Soviet friend and fellow dynamiter, "Kashkin." Hemingway also remarks that this was but one of many similar operations in Extremadura during that period.<sup>1</sup>

By early 1937 the indiscriminate reprisals of the Nationalists in Seville and its environs had generated at least one quite large guerrilla band in the nearby mountains. This group comprised some 300 peasants and former citizens of Seville. Recognizing that their survival depended on maintaining some sort liaison with the Loyalist Zone, they sent one of their group off to make contact. After a six-weeks overland trip through Rebel terrain, he reached the Loyalist Zone. Learning of the plight of his group, the Loyalist authorities decided to render support; and he returned to the band, bringing with him ten guerrilla warfare instructors. By April 1937, the group had become a sufficient problem for the Nationalists that they launched a counterguerrilla campaign to eliminate them. This operation against the 300 guerrillas employed a small army of 4,000 Nationalist troops with artillery and tanks and supported by aircraft. Being hard-pressed by this large force, the band set out across the mountainous terrain on May 1st headed for the Loyalist lines. An advance scouting party of 13 men (with

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1940), pp. 24, 233, 250.

only 9 revolvers and a few hand grenades among them) managed to cross the porous southern front, reaching the Loyalist Zone of Cordoba province, 20 difficult days and 150 hard miles later. There, near Belalcazár, they chanced <sup>upon</sup> <sub>A</sub> outposts of the XIIIth International Brigade and were questioned by --among others-- Lieutenant Alfred Kantorowicz, the famed German Communist philosopher serving on the Brigade Staff.<sup>1</sup>

One of the largest and most successful guerrilla bands in all Spain arose in the Río Tinto copper-mining region over 100 miles behind the front. This group also developed from the local reaction to Nationalist reprisals against innocent villagers in the neighborhood for the sabotage activities of deep penetration Loyalist commando squads. Once the local resistance movement developed to include some 3,000 men, the NKVD took over direction by dispatching an advisory group of Spanish demolition experts led by two Soviet officers, a Major Strik and Captain Stepan Glushko. This group arrived overland by foot with Nationalist currency and, more critically, a two-way radio transmitter with which they immediately arranged for air drops from Soviet bombers of substantial quantities of weapons: "hundreds of tommy guns, German large automatic Mausers, light carbines, and hand grenades."

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Kantorowicz, "Die Partisanen," in Alfred Kantorowicz (editor), "Tschapaiew": Das Bataillon der 21 Nationen (Madrid: Imprenta Colectiva Torrent, 1938), pp. 221-224. Some additional details--mainly those too indiscreet for wartime publication--are supplied by the author in his Spanisches Tagebuch (3rd ed., Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1951), pp. 150-158.

Major Strik and his demolition experts returned after four months of on-the-job training of the partisans. During that period Captain Glushko had been killed in action, and leadership of the partisans had passed into the hands of a Dr. Mola, a local physician and natural leader who had voluntarily joined the guerrillas and eventually was himself killed during a demolition raid in spring 1938. After the departure of Major Strik, communications with the Loyalist guerrilla headquarters were maintained, presumably through their radio transceiver.<sup>1</sup>

A closely censored letter from "an American now active on the Extremaduran front" is briefly noted in a November 1937 issue of an official periodical of the International Brigades as stating he had recently met some "members of a band of guerrilleros who had just come out of the mountains on a short mission." The anonymous American, not himself a guerrilla, describes them as regular mountaineers who conduct "constant partisan warfare behind the enemy's lines."<sup>2</sup>

A lengthy letter in late 1937 allegedly from an anonymous 27-year old American Communist--possibly the same person mentioned above--serving on the Extremaduran Front provides some second-hand discussion of behind-the-lines guerrilla operations there by local partisans. He alleges that their raids on garrisons and lines of communication served to tie down substantial numbers of Italian and Moorish troops in security work. He indicates

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<sup>1</sup> Orlov (63), 176-178.

<sup>2</sup> Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 1, No. 24 (Madrid: 17 Nov 1937), p. 2.

that these organized bands were composed of both "refugees and guerrilleros" with secure bases deep in the hills.<sup>1</sup> And as late as early 1938 the guerrillas of Extremadura were reported by the Republican press to have blown up eight Nationalist trains.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S. P., "'El Guerrillero'--Underground Fighter Against Fascism," Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 1, No. 28 (Madrid: 27 Dec 1937), pp. 6-7, with photos. Based, in part, on an interview conducted 25 kilometers behind the Loyalist lines with an Extremaduran guerrilla who had crossed over on an unspecified mission.

<sup>2</sup> Volunteer for Liberty, Vol. 2, No. 21 (Barcelona: 15 Jun 1938), p. 12, citing a news item published "recently" in the Madrid Republican Left newspaper, Política.

D. Operations in the Basque Republic

When on 18 June 1937 Bilbao, capital of the devoutly Catholic, strongly democratic, and staunchly anti-Franco autonomous Basque Republic, fell to the Nationalist siege, some regular Basque units escaped to establish brief but successful guerrilla resistance in the forested hills of Western Vizcaya.<sup>1</sup> These actions were, however, more in the nature of improvised rearguard ambushes than of traditional guerrilla type; although Toynbee applied that term to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, 1937, Vol. 2 ("The International Repercussions of the War in Spain"), p. 73.

### E. Operations in Asturias

In the first weeks of the rebellion, in July and August, several guerrilla bands developed in Asturias Province and operated there briefly against the local Insurgent forces until the Loyalist regulars consolidated the region. These bands were formed variously by Asturian miners, by dock workers who had fled from Vigo and El Ferrol, and by railwaymen from Valladolid, Alsasua, and Miranda de Ebro.<sup>1</sup>

When the beleaguered Gijón pocket on the Bay of Biscay fell to the Nationalists on 21 October 1937, some 18 thousand physically and materially exhausted Loyalists--troops and civilians--fled into the mountainous hinterland where they functioned as more-or-less organized guerrillas in the Leonese mountains until March 1938. This impromptu operation at least served to tie down sufficient Nationalist forces to both delay their planned offensive against Madrid and force close patrolling of the Asturias until the very end of the war.<sup>2</sup> When Gijón fell, Soviet General Vladimir Gorev, who

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson (65), 265-266. Interestingly, the Asturian miners--expert dynamiters--had engaged in a similar operation during their revolt in 1934.

<sup>2</sup> Twenty-two Loyalist brigades surrendered at the end of this seven week siege. 209 persons--guerrillas or their suspected supporters--were executed in Asturias in Jan 1938 alone. Ehrenburg (63), 147; Thomas (61), 480; E. Allison Peers, Spain in Eclipse (London: Methuen, 1943), p. 27; Toynbee (38), 77; and the Duchess of Atholl, Searchlight on Spain (3rd ed., Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1938), p. 167. In a comprehensive letter to Mussolini at the beginning of Mar 1938 Franco specifically cited

had arrived in June from Bilbao to act as the chief Soviet adviser in that sector, escaped into the mountains with the remainder of his 26-man advisory mission until evacuated by Soviet planes.<sup>1</sup> But there is no indication that Gorev and his staff either encouraged much less participated in these guerilla activities. The Soviet officers apparently merely hid until rescued.

The Asturian countryside continued unsettled even after the Civil War. Thus in the summer of 1939 bands of militia turned to outlawry, harrassing the local Nationalist forces until at least as late as the next year.<sup>2</sup>

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these persistent pockets of resistance that had prevented redeployment of his troops as the major factor delaying his offensive on the Central Front for which Mussolini had been clamoring as a virtual condition of the continued presence of Italian ground troops. Ciano's Hidden Diary, 1937-1938 (New York: Dutton, 1953), p. 83, entry for 4 Mar 1938.

<sup>1</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 147.

<sup>2</sup> Peers (43), 27, 88.



### F. Operations in Aragón

Following the arrest by the Loyalist checa and almost certain execution of his father--the Professor of Spanish at The Johns Hopkins University, José Robles Pazos, whose sudden disappearance in late December 1936 while serving as interpreter and aide to Soviet General Gorev remains an imperfectly solved mystery--the 18-year old son, Francisco, left his job as a guide under Constanca de la Mora in the Foreign Press and Censorship Department in Valencia to volunteer for guerrilla duty. Francisco Robles served with a partisan band engaged in sabotage and harrassing raids into and near Saragossa until captured by the Nationalists in 1938.<sup>1</sup>

The use of guerrilla units to directly support an offensive by regular units is clearly illustrated in the Battle of Teruel fought in the bitter winter of 1937-38. The battle was an uncharacteristically imaginative use of stratagem by the Loyalist high command in an effort to divert Nationalist strength from other, more vital, sections of the battlefront, thereby spoiling their plans for an early offensive.<sup>2</sup> In preparing for their own attack, several Loyalist guerrilla teams were brought up the 200 miles from the newly formed 14th Guerrilla Corps, then headquartered on the southern Cordoba-Granada front. The Loyalists had scheduled their attack for dawn of

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<sup>1</sup> See biographical sketch of F. Robles in Appendix B.

<sup>2</sup> See Barton Whaley, Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War (New York: Praeger, forthcoming 1970), where the Battle of Teruel is treated in detail as a case study.

15 December 1937; the guerrilla detachments began their work the previous day: infiltrating the lines on the night of the 13th-14th and spending the day of the 14th mining roads, blowing bridges, and disrupting communications across the frozen Teruel front.<sup>1</sup>

Let us follow the activities of one of these guerrilla units at Teruel. It was a 10-man unit composed of Lieutenants Irving Goff and William Aalto--both Americans--two Finns, and a half-dozen Spaniards. After arriving at the front from the south, they were initially based west of the Teruel salient at Cuenca, then advanced to a Loyalist-held mountain village. Their assigned target was a small bridge over the Guadalavíer River linking the Rebel-held towns of Teruel and Albarracín. They set out on their tightly scheduled mission in the freezing night of the 13th-14th being guided the 20 kilometers through the hills by a local peasant. They reached the bridge at first light, happily found it unguarded, blew it up, destroyed all nearby telephone lines, and then made a successful running fight back to their lines, chased by Rebel cavalry.<sup>2</sup>

One example of a last-stand that has been mis-labeled a "guerrilla" action was the widely publicized stand by Colonel Beltrán in the Pyrenees. For a few weeks in May and June 1938 the Republican 43rd Division of 10,000 regular troops under Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Beltrán was cut off in the

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<sup>1</sup> Landis (67), 349.

<sup>2</sup> Landis (67), 347-349, based on interview with Goff in 1964.

Valle del Alto Cinca adjoining the French frontier, his contact with Republican Spain largely limited to radio. His briefly successful efforts to fight off his besiegers, won him the name of "El Esquinazado" (The Dodger) and considerable attention from the British press, which mistook his nickname to mean "The Dupe." When on 16 June his last improvised redoubt, the Pyrenean town of Bielsa, fell the 4,000 survivors of his command crossed the adjoining frontier into France. It is quite clear from the detailed, eyewitness report by The New York Times correspondent Herbert L. Matthews that Beltrán's force was fighting along conventional, not guerrilla, lines as stated by Peers and Thomas who misconstrue from Beltrán's nickname, "The Dodger," that his tactics were those of elusive guerrilla movement.<sup>1</sup>

The last great, desperate Loyalist offensive, the recrossing of the Ebro on 25 July 1938, was reportedly supported by guerrilla operations behind the Franco lines.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The New York Times, 6 Jun 1938, p. 1, for dispatch by Herbert L. Matthews based on his visit; Thomas (61), 533, 541; Peers (43), 51, who specifically dubs this a "guerrilla" action; and Aznar, III (63), 148-155. Dr. Ernst Halperin recalls that Beltrán was later revealed to have been a Spanish Communist, a small fact that goes far in accounting for his staunch resistance. See also Henry Buckley, Life and Death of the Spanish Republic (London: Hamilton, 1940), p. 364.

<sup>2</sup> Francesca M. Wilson, In the Margins of Chaos (New York: Macmillan, 1945), p. 230.

In early August 1938, Communist Daily Worker correspondent Joseph North told his trusted colleague in the International Brigades, Alvah Bessie, that one of the effects of the then - going Loyalist offensive in Aragón was to give encouragement to the guerrillas operating in Nationalist territory (presumably in Aragón).<sup>1</sup>

Criticizing the defeatism of the Republican junta in Madrid that led to the coup surrendering that city to Franco on 28 March 1939, Julio Álvarez del Vayo argues somewhat irrelevantly:<sup>2</sup>

That our belief in resistance to the last was not romantic madness had been abundantly proved by the achievements of the guerrillas and the maquis in Yugoslavia, in Greece, in France, and later in Israel.

Fulfillment of any such hope for a continuing guerrilla resistance phase would have required at least some measure of preparation or planning. However it was precisely this that was lacking throughout on the part of the Spanish Loyalists. There is no evidence that even the Communists considered a coordinated post-defeat resistance program. Hence, except for some isolated and uncoordinated pockets, all guerrilla operations apparently ended with the withdrawal of the NKVD mission. Thus the extensive guerrilla warfare that was to be mounted after the end of the Civil War had to be improvised afresh.

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<sup>1</sup> Bessie (39), 267.

<sup>2</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (50), 305.

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Stalin's decision was seemingly to liquidate the entire Communist involvement. Thus, all Spanish Communist officials were brought to Moscow at the end of the Civil War.

## V. COUNTERGUERRILLA OPERATIONS

Almost nothing has been written about specific Nationalist measures to counter the NKVD guerrillas. It appears that they did not evolve any new military strategies or tactics to meet this special threat. The skimpy evidence suggests that they merely depended on traditional security measures; although, as I shall suggest, the political program of the Falange may have inhibited the local development of guerrilla bands. That these proved adequate to cope with the situation indicates that Loyalist guerrilla operations never posed a major problem. However, the full story probably depends on the opening of this portion of the Nationalist archives.

The Spanish Army had had recent experience in successfully countering paramilitary actions. And this army was the very force that comprised the Nationalist revolt, the rebellion being initiated and headed by Army generals Sanjurjo, Mola, and Franco and supported by 90 to 95 per cent of the overloaded officer corps<sup>1</sup> who brought with them most of the regular army units. This force had been blooded in two earlier counterinsurgency actions: the Moroccan War of the 1920's and the Asturias Revolt of 1934. Significantly, General Franco had played a prominent part in both cases.

The Riff revolts in Spanish Morocco that began in 1917 were not finally crushed until 1926. Although this was a bitter and costly campaign conducted

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<sup>1</sup> Only 13 generals and 200-500 officers served the Loyalists. Thomas (61), 200; Álvarez del Vayo (40), 122.

against tribal warriors, the Spanish Army not only failed to develop any decisive counterinsurgency tactics but demonstrated its incompetence for traditional combat. Indeed the campaign was brought to a successful conclusion only with the active and massive military participation of the French forces from French Morocco. The major innovation was the founding (in 1920) of the Spanish Foreign Legion (Tercio), which quickly developed into an élite force under its all-Spanish officer corps.<sup>1</sup> The second innovation was that (beginning in 1913) this was probably the first case where aviation was used against insurgents.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the revolutionaries in the Asturias in 1934 were defeated within a fortnight by the swift, decisive, and quite brutal intervention of the Tercio and units of the Moorish Regulares, supported by aircraft.<sup>3</sup> The astonishingly rapid deployment of these crack units was in large part made possible by the major transformation in the military geography of Spain that had been achieved in the 1920s by the extensive road building projects of dictator-Premier Primo de Rivera.<sup>4</sup> This

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<sup>1</sup> On the Riff campaigns see particularly the autobiographies of Vincent Sheean and Arturo Barea. Also Vice-Admiral C. V. Usborne, The Conquest of Morocco (London: Stanley Paul, 1936), for a conventional military history.

<sup>2</sup> Captain José Larios, Combat over Spain (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> For details of the still inadequately studied Asturias revolt see Brenan (43), Jackson (65), and Welles (65).

<sup>4</sup> These new roads permitted any part of Spain to be reached from Madrid within a half day. Jay Allen in Quintanilla (39), 20-22.

new road system also permitted the suppression of the revolt in Asturias through the rapid and effective use of motorized units in Spain.<sup>1</sup>

Nor did Franco's German and Italian allies apparently have much to contribute to counterinsurgency activities. Except for some air attacks, their substantial regular combat forces in Spain did not evidently conduct actions directly against the Loyalist guerrillas and probably limited themselves mainly to guarding their bases and lines against raiding parties. This we know was true of at least some of the Italian forces in Extremadura. Furthermore it is known that their intelligence was notably ineffective against the Soviet intervention in Spain,<sup>2</sup> and they had not yet developed any practical field manuals--much less any systematic military doctrine--addressed to counteracting guerrilla warfare.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Major G. R. Johnston (R.A.), "Mechanized Columns in Spain," Army Quarterly, Vol. 34, No. 2 (July 1937), pp. 323-336.

<sup>2</sup> See my Soviet Intervention in the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1965).

<sup>3</sup> At least this was true of the Wehrmacht, which was still without such manuals on the outset of their meeting with the Russian Partisans in 1941 and only managed to evolve a comprehensive manual in 1944. Brigadier C. Aubrey Dixon and Otto Heilmann, Communist Guerrilla Warfare (London: Allen and Unwin, 1954), pp. 148-149. Although the Italian Army had just been blooded in irregular warfare in Abyssinia, it too fought both campaigns along conventional lines. See particularly Herbert Matthews, Two Wars and More to Come (New York: Carrick and Evans, 1938), who as war correspondent of The New York Times in both Abyssinia and Spain was peculiarly qualified to note any parallels. Nor do the published accounts of either the several

The only known employment of the German and Italian expeditionary forces against counterinsurgents was through aviation. Their planes were used to completely destroy at least one village--

Benito--in Andalusia in the first winter of the war. This village together with Cáceres and a half dozen others in Andalusia had risen in revolt in the Nationalist zone allegedly as a result of the Loyalists' successful stand before Madrid in November 1936. At that time it was widely believed by Spaniards--as well as by such senior Germans as Göring and Captain Roland von Strunk--that the rebellion would fail without massive foreign aid. To crush these insurgent villages the German and Italian Air Forces were diverted from their regular bombing raids. One Italian army pilot told his old friend, the Chicago Daily News correspondent Whitaker, regarding the razing of Benito:<sup>1</sup>

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other foreign correspondents who served in both these wars (O. D. Gallagher, Floyd Gibbons, Webb Miller, Noel Monks, and George Steer) or the official battle history by Marshal Badoglio mention guerrilla warfare. However both Emperor Hailé Sellassié and some of his commanders (particularly Takele) had considered the possibility of guerrilla warfare and even established a training school (under a Canadian) near Addis Ababa in early 1936, but it was only in 1940-1941 under Major Orde Wingate's Anglo-Ethiopian "Gideon Force" that the Italians encountered serious guerrilla fighting. Richard Greenfield, Ethiopia: A New Political History (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 200, 219-220, 229-236, 258-259.

<sup>1</sup> John T. Whitaker, We Cannot Escape History (New York: Macmillan, 1943), p. 104.



First we dropped leaflets which said, 'Red atheists, prepare for death.' Then we circled back and dropped high explosives and incendiaries. I don't mind bombing troops. I don't like murdering old men and women and children in villages.

In addition, Hemingway's fictional account of the use of Italian aircraft to occasionally fly bombing and strafing sorties against pin-pointed guerrilla bands probably has a factual basis, as do most of the guerrilla events in his novel.<sup>1</sup>

In sum the part played in counter guerrilla warfare by the Nationalist Army seems limited to occasional offensive sweeps to harass, dislodge, and destroy guerrilla bands and to their inadvertent creation of new bands by indiscriminate reprisals in the countryside.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, a key to the geographical spread, intensity, and frequency of guerrilla actions is perhaps to be found in the occupation policies of the Nationalists, particularly in rural areas. Unfortunately, this important topic still awaits its definitive monograph. Such a systematic, critical, descriptive, and evaluative survey would require a most exacting effort to sift through the mass of relevant but largely either self-serving or uncritically and ignorantly gullible literature. The scholar confronts a recalcitrant

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<sup>1</sup> Hemingway (40), Ch. 27, particularly pp. 310, 312, 315, 320-321.

<sup>2</sup> This was certainly an important factor in the development of the Soviet partisan movement during Nazi occupation during World War II. Armstrong (64), 30, 320-337.

tangle of partisan propaganda, mutual recrimination, uninformed and sensational journalism, selective documentation, ranging from the official lies of the contending régimes to the pseudo-objective pox-on-both-your-houses scholastic trivia of Hugh Thomas. Fortunately, we have two eyewitness accounts<sup>by</sup> former well-placed Nationalist officials of life in the Nationalist zone that describe the policies of terror,<sup>1</sup> some fragmentary reports and memoirs by foreign visitors and journalists,<sup>2</sup> and the superb critical polemical analyses by Herbert R. Southworth.<sup>3</sup>

While recognizing that the evidence is weak, three highly pertinent general conclusions seem warrantable about the nature of the terror in the Nationalist zone. First, it was quite general, often intense, and more-or-less indiscriminate.<sup>4</sup> Second, it went through three phases:<sup>5</sup> (1) summary execution without any semblance of judicial proceeding (from the outbreak of the rebellion in July 1936 until early October); (2) execution after civil

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<sup>1</sup> These two are [Antonio] Ruiz Vilaplana, Burgos Justice (New York: Knopf, 1938). Señor Ruiz was a devout Roman Catholic who served as Commissioner of Justice in the Nationalist capital at Burgos until he fled to France on 30 Jun 1937. Antonio Bahamonde, Memoirs of a Spanish Nationalist (London: United Editorial, 1939). Señor Bahamonde was Commissioner of Press and Propaganda for Nationalist General Queipo de Llano until he emigrated to Belgium in late 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Particularly the reports by Jay Allen to the Chicago Tribune.

<sup>3</sup> Particularly his Le Mythe de la Croisade de Franco (Paris: Ruedo Ibérico, 1964).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Whitaker (43), 108-113.

<sup>5</sup> As identified by Bahamonde (39), 85-94.

hearings by locally constituted ad hoc bodies, although the accused were often not heard (early October 1936 until February 1937); (3) execution after formal conviction by regularly established authorities, particularly the Councils of War (from February 1937 on). Third, the private political needs of the Falangist Party produced a rather indiscriminate recruiting policy that inadvertently served to absorb and therefore control many of the surviving Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, and others<sup>1</sup> who otherwise would have remained available for recruitment as guerrillas.

Suppression, control, and prevention of insurgency can--in some places and at certain times--be effectively carried out by a systematically conducted campaign of terror or extermination. For example, this has been done effectively--and specifically for this purpose--by the Spartans against their own generally disaffected and frequently rebellious serfs in the 5th to 2nd century B.C.,<sup>2</sup> the Mongols in 13th century Persia, and the Brazilian

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley G. Payne, Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), pp. 128-129; Charles Foltz, Jr., The Masquerade in Spain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), p. 77; and Bahamonde (39).

<sup>2</sup> The Spartans used their secret police (crypteia) against their serfs (Helots) in apparently quite discriminatory ways, either preventively by selective assassinations of identified rebel leaders or punitively by mass slaughter of the specific Helot groups that had rebelled. See H. Michell, Sparta (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), pp. 75-84; and K. M. T. Chrimes, Ancient Sparta (New York: Philosophical Library, 1952).

army in northeastern Brazil in 1896-97.<sup>1</sup> These cases owe their success to the fact that they involved virtually total physical extermination of the hostile populations. Halfway measures risk not only incomplete results as in the German efforts to control the French maquis by intimidation of the French population in World War II, but can even prove counterproductive as in the German's simultaneous efforts--pursued at an even more vigorous and destructive level--to control partisan movements in the Ukraine.

In sum, the only specific policy used by the Nationalists to cope with behind-the-lines insurgency was one of unselective terrorism, attempting the complete extermination of all persons and groups believed capable or desirous of opposing them.

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<sup>1</sup> Euclides da Cunha, Rebellion in the Backlands (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944); and Chalmers A. Johnson, "Civilian Loyalties and Guerrilla Conflict," World Politics, Vol. 14, No. 4 (Jul 1962), pp. 659-660.

## VI. TERMINATION OF GUERRILLA WAR

In the closing months of the war Franco told the Germans he expected the "Reds" would continue a tough "guerrilla warfare" resistance at local levels after their defeat in the field. He indicated the arrival of that stage of paramilitary activities would mark the end of the need for the German and Italian combat units in Spain.<sup>1</sup> However, except for some local and seemingly uncoordinated pockets of resistance, guerrilla warfare abruptly stopped with the conclusion of the main hostilities. This happened apparently because few guerrilla operations in Spain were self-sustaining at that time and so ended with the withdrawal of the NKVD. Curiously, no attention seems to have been given the possibility of organizing any post-civil war guerrilla resistance movement at the very time when the deadline for such an alternative action was fast approaching. The bravado that had poured forth while this course remained only a distinct hypothetical problem was forgotten in the face of actual collapse. Knowledgeable authorities now spoke only of continuing conventional positional warfare in the remaining pockets of Loyalist terrain.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Department of State, Germany and the Spanish Civil War (Washington, D.C.: U. S. GPO, 1950; published as "Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945," Series D, Vol. III), p. 653.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Captain Walter E. Williams (pseud.), "Strategy After Barcelona," New Masses, Vol. 30, No. 7 (7 Feb 1939), pp. 5-6. Captain "Williams"--identified in this Communist magazine only as a "high-ranking officer who served two years in the International Brigade"--made this prediction even while mentioning that this was the very terrain where in Napoleon's day guerrilla resistance had proved feasible.

When in March 1939 a local junta unexpectedly surrendered Madrid to Franco, the last Loyalist urban center collapsed. Despite Franco's expectations and the earlier statements of Spanish Loyalist bravadoes, virtually all resistance simply ended. The Government scattered abroad, and the Spanish Communist leaders fled to Moscow together with the few remaining members of the Soviet diplomatic and military missions.

Seventeen months before the Loyalist collapse, New Republic correspondent Malcolm Cowley managed a most prescient reading of the future.<sup>1</sup>

First of all would come the general slaughter of his enemies that has been promised now for more than a year. But afterwards what would happen in the graveyard? Some people think that Franco would be faced by a whole series of insurrections, by unending guerrilla warfare: I cannot agree with them. The Spaniards are the bravest nation in Europe, but it is not in their nature to continue fighting for a lost cause; they would be more likely to sink back into apathy.

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<sup>1</sup> Malcolm Cowley, "To Madrid," New Republic, 6 October 1937, pp. 237-238.

# VII. EPILOGUE: SPANISH GUERRILLAS, 1939-1948

Although all centrally organized guerrilla operations in Spain had ceased simultaneously with the conventional fighting, Spanish émigrés resumed guerrilla operations in France and the Soviet Union during World War II. Indeed, those with the French maquis extended their operations back into Spain. At the end of the war the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) had even managed to organize a tenuous guerrilla underground in Spain that operated until 1959.

Between the end of 1938 and early 1939 with the rapid collapse of the Republican régime, large numbers of Loyalist civilians and soldiers had escaped into France.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the Communist party leadership fled to Moscow where it remained until the end of World War II.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly 150,000 Spaniards eventually settled permanently in Southern France of the half million that had originally entered: 10,000 wounded troops; 250,000 soldiers; 170,000 women and children; and 60,000 adult male civilians. Belgium accepted a couple of thousand children, Mexico accepted about 2,300 refugees, and Britain a few leaders. But Russia refused any postwar refugees other than 6,000 militant Communists, although some 5,000 of their children had already been admitted during the war. Thomas (61), 575, 605-606, 619-620; Madariaga (43), 440-443; and Hernandez (53), 222-224. Professor Julio Cotler's unpublished doctoral dissertation from the University of Bordeaux (1960) is a study of the acculturation of the Loyalist refugees in France.

<sup>2</sup> Valentín Gonzalez and Julian Gorkin, El Campesino: Life and Death in Soviet Russia (New York: Putnam's, 1952, translated from the original

Of the Spaniards in France, many--one estimate says 50,000--extended their range of action to the sabotage of German supply trains inside Spain itself, and Spanish units accompanied the first maquis (FFI) units that entered liberated Paris on 24 August 1944.<sup>1</sup> However, no systematic use of the Loyalist underground was made by the British SOE, although it did use some individuals.<sup>2</sup>

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French edition of 1950). Valentín González ("El Campesino") testified in Paris on 15 Dec 1950 at the celebrated Kravchenko libel trial that some 6,000 militant Spanish Communists had immigrated to the USSR after the Civil War; and, of these, González estimated that 1,200 were still in NKVD prisons in 1948 when he escaped. Le Procès concentrationnaire pour la vérité sur les camps (Paris: Pavois, 1951), p. 173. See also Hernandez<sup>(53)</sup>, 187-254. Another work reputed to discuss the fates of Spanish émigrés in Russia is José Antonio Rico, En los dominios del Kremlin.

<sup>1</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (50), 278-279; Thomas (61), 620; Isabel de Palencia, Smouldering Freedom: The Story of the Spanish Republicans in Exile (New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1945), pp. 219-221. In 1944, AP correspondent Charles Foltz ran across such units operating against the Germans near the Franco-Spanish frontier and learned from them that they were well supplied by parachuted U.S. and British arms. Charles Foltz, Jr., The Masquerade in Spain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), pp. 57-58. For detailed account of the Spanish maquis in France in WW II by the wartime Chief of Propaganda Analysis at the U. S. Embassy, Madrid, see Abel Plenn, Wind in the Olive Trees (New York: Boni & Gaer, 1946), pp. 211, 214-217, 256, 290, 310, 317. The estimate of 50,000 Spaniards with the maquis is in Jose Yglesias, "The Deepest Involvement of All," New Republic, Vol. 201, No. 13 (29 Nov 1965), pp. 418-420.

<sup>2</sup> Early SOE negotiations with the Aleanza Democratica Española through its organizer, British leftist G. N. Marshall, were broken off at the urging of the British Embassy in Madrid which argued that such activity would disturb Franco. Foot (66), 176.



The several thousand Spanish Communist refugees in Russia also contributed during the German invasion to the Red Army, particularly in guerrilla units.<sup>1</sup> For example, the former Spanish Communist leader, Hernández Tomás, refers to an all-Spanish group of 25 guerrillas led by a Captain Alcade and including NKVD-man Antonio Zubiaurren as instructor that was wiped out by German troops when they attempted to parachute into a behind-the-lines zone near Leningrad in the winter of 1942.<sup>2</sup>

The Soviet World War II partisan forces used at least some of the Russian NKVD personnel who had acquired experience in guerrilla warfare in Spain. At least two cases are known, one being that of no less a person than Eitingon, who, as the Deputy Chief of the NKVD mission in Spain, had been directly in charge of the NKVD's guerrilla training and operation there.<sup>3</sup> During World War II he was Deputy Chief of the NKVD Fourth Administration, the bureau specifically concerned with partisan operations. Although it is likely that such a senior person would have brought with him some of his former Civil War comrades of the 14th Guerrilla Corps, none have been identified, except Starinov.

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<sup>1</sup> John A. Armstrong (editor), Soviet Partisans in World War II (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 11, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Zubiaurren had been with the Soviet NKVD mission under General Orlov in Spain around 1937. Hernández (53), 112.

<sup>3</sup> Another possible example is the otherwise unidentified Mokrousov who had been some sort of Soviet adviser in Spain and later a guerrilla commander on the Russian front. Armstrong (64), 11, 48.

During the liberation of France in 1944, Spanish Loyalist émigrés there succeeded in establishing regular clandestine channels into Spain; and in 1945 they attempted to implant viable guerrilla warfare bases on Spanish territory as a vainglorious step toward eventual return to power. This campaign was launched by sending nearly 3,000 Spanish veterans of the maquis on an armed raid across the Pyrenees through the Valle de Aran. However, this raid was crushingly defeated by combined Spanish troops and the Guardia Civil. Nevertheless, operations continued, expanding in scope from mere isolated acts of sabotage to include some raids on arsenals and other supply sources.<sup>1</sup> In a clandestine meeting in Madrid with the visiting New York Times correspondent, C. L. Sulzberger, the underground Communist party propaganda chief, "Felipe" attributed the smallness of the guerrilla movement entirely to the shortage of arms, claiming that for each of the 9 to 12 thousand armed guerrillas there were three others actively supporting them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For these Loyalist guerrilla activities in Spain in 1944 and 1945 see Welles (65), 209; Plenn (46), 290, 304, 307, 310-313, and Palencia (45), 189, 195-200, 206, 219-224. See also Eric Hobsbawm, "Goliath and the Guerrilla," The Nation, Vol. 201, No. 2 (19 Jul 1965), pp. 34, 37. See particularly Emmet John Hughes, Report from Spain (New York: Holt, 1947), 192, 209-215. This is the one account that combines objectivity with knowledgeability, Hughes being brevited as the State Department and Army G-2 intelligence reporter on the anti-Franco underground under cover of his official post as Press Attaché in the Madrid Embassy from 1942 until his resignation in 1946.

<sup>2</sup> C. L. Sulzberger, A Long Row of Candles (New York: Macmillan, 1969), p. 302, quoting his diary for 19 Feb 1946.

Álvarez del Vayo describes, first hand, guerrilla operations as late as 1949, although admitting that these "guerrillas cannot be reorganized overnight. They need time, and, above all, they need arms. Recruits are joining them as fast as they can be supplied with weapons." In any event, these operations evidently consisted mainly of railway sabotage; and the guerrilleros were sheltered by local peasants with whom they occasionally took a night's lodging. According to Álvarez del Vayo the farm houses in the village of Sipán were all burned in a ruthless Government reprisal for having sheltered guerrillas.<sup>1</sup> Finally, in 1950, the French Government withdrew its tacit harboring of Spanish guerrilla bands, forbade anti-Franco activities, and restored normal diplomatic relations with Madrid. As an immediate consequence the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) was forced into entirely underground activities after recalling its guerrillas to Toulouse.<sup>2</sup>

During the liberation of France the operational branch of the PCE inside Spain was reestablished as an illegal and clandestine organization, coordinated with the PCE Politburo in Moscow through a branch headquarters

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<sup>1</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (50), 388-390; Thomas (61), 620. Writing in 1948 on the basis of lengthy Civil War and WW II journalism experience in Spain, the strongly anti-Franco Foltz (48), 324, reluctantly concluded that both the Spanish exile factions and the "organized resistance" inside Spain were "pitifully weak." Thomas (61), 620 errs in stating that these efforts to implant guerrilla ended in 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Welles (65), 209.

near the Spanish border in Toulouse, France. By 1956 the PCE Politburo had moved to Prague where it reportedly has maintained its headquarters to the present. This émigré body has continued to provide the centralized policy direction for the Party's activities and branches in Czechoslovakia, Russia, Spain, France, and Mexico as well as conducting the bulk of its international propaganda.<sup>1</sup> In 1941 the Russians began a transmission identifying itself as Radio España Independiente (REI), which was not only the first clandestine propaganda station to broadcast during WW II but the only one to survive the war, continuing to the present (May 1962).<sup>2</sup>

The Spanish Communist group at Toulouse founded in 1944 or 1945 a guerrilla warfare school "somewhere in France" and arranged border crossings into Spain. In 1944, a clandestine CPE medium-wave radio transmitter in Toulouse, also calling itself Radio España Independiente, carried broadcasts in Spanish and Catalan calling for "united action" by all anti-Franco factions until quickly suppressed by De Gaulle. The organization inside Spain began clandestine weekly publication of the Party's official newspaper, Mundo Obrero, and maintained communication with the Toulouse branch by courier and two-way

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Ebon, World Communism Today (New York: Whittlesey House, 1946), pp. 250-252; and Welles (65), 209, 210, 215. See González and Gorkin (52) for the early years of the Spanish émigré party in Moscow.

<sup>2</sup> On REI see John C. Clews, Communist Propaganda Techniques (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 124; and Welles (65), 214-216. Plenn (46), 198-199, also notes that the Spanish Communist leaders in Moscow broadcast nightly to Spain during WW II. Ebon (52), 250, is indefinite in locating Radio "Independent Spain."

radio, harrassed by occasional exposure and seizure of leaders, radio operators, radios, and presses.<sup>1</sup>

The initial reestablishment of guerrilleros that had occurred in Asturias had expanded by 1945 to neighboring Galicia and even to Malaga, Ronda, Cordoba, Huelva, and Extremadura.<sup>2</sup> These operations were conducted close to the French frontier and involved extensive border crossing. For example, Julio Álvarez del Vayo--then under a death sentence decreed in absentia--himself crossed over for a day in the summer of 1949, managing to escape a brief arrest only by posing as an American tourist.<sup>3</sup>

The bitter internal factional politics that so crippled the Loyalist camp during the Civil War were carried over unabated among the various émigré remnants as well as among the so-called "underground" groups inside Spain itself.<sup>4</sup> Álvarez del Vayo reveals that the more militant factions, including

<sup>1</sup> Ebon (48), 250-252; Plenn (46), 216-217, for the Toulouse transmitter.

<sup>2</sup> Palencia (45), 197-199, 221-224. Indeed Señora de Palencia states that fighting in Asturias had never ceased.

<sup>3</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (50), 382-388.

<sup>4</sup> For detailed accounts of the Spanish "underground" and its connections with the emigration see Plenn (46), index and 214, 216, 218, 303-326; and Welles (65), 202-216. For a recent survey of the disaffected but ineffectual Masonic, Protestant, and Jewish minorities in Spain see Paul Blanchard, Freedom and Catholic Power in Spain and Portugal (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962).

the Communists, joined in efforts that culminated in the founding in 1947 of the España Combatiente with the program of (1) fighting, "by every necessary means" for Franco's overthrow and (2) uncompromising "republicanism."<sup>1</sup>

In 1946 the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee and again early in 1963 the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the front group organized in 1937 in New York by the American Communist Party, launched fund-raising campaigns ostensibly for the relief of Spaniards suffering under Franco oppression or arrested in conjunction with the strikes in Spain in 1962. However, the U. S. House Un-American Affairs Committee alleged that these funds were fraudulently obtained, being in fact diverted to the supply of "clothing and other items" to the Spanish Communist underground.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Álvarez del Vayo (50), 371, who became the initial Provisional President of the España Combatiente until elected its regular President at the First Congress in 1948, alleges that, after their participation in its founding, the Communists "remained completely aloof, apparently because they are not in a position to control the organization." But Señor Álvarez del Vayo's own position in the organization is prima facie evidence that it was a Communist front group in view of his consistent record, attested to by virtually all his former associates of all political persuasions, of dissembling on behalf of the Communists.

<sup>2</sup> "U. S. Communist Party Assistance to Foreign Communist Parties (Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade)," Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Session, 29 July 1963 (Washington. D.C.: U. S. GPO, 1963).

The fabulous Spanish Communist General "El Campesino" (Valentín González) who when evacuated to Moscow after the Civil War attended the Frunze Academy where he broke discipline and was expelled, later imprisoned, escaped to Iran, was recaptured and imprisoned at Vorkuta but escaped again to Iran in 1950, and now lives in Brussels. There, as recently as 1960, he was reported to be ineffectually plotting to raise an expeditionary force to invade Spain.<sup>1</sup> It is also quite clear from his own memoirs that since leaving Spain in 1939, his desire to return to organize a guerrilla war to overthrow Franco has been a consuming obsession.<sup>2</sup>

I have not seen convincing evidence that any of these post-World War II operations have presented anything more than local police problems to the régime in Madrid. As during the Civil War, the various opposition groups seem persistently incapable of uniting sufficiently to command respect as a serious potential alternative to the present oligarchical factions. Indeed

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas (61), 620. For "El Campesino"'s career see Colodny (58), index; Bolloten (61), index; and his own semi-fictionalized biography, written in collaboration with Julián Gorkin, El Campesino: Life and Death in Soviet Russia (New York: Putnam's, 1952), including a photo dating ca. 1936. Plenn (46), 307, incorrectly reports that "El Campesino" was one of three senior Spanish Republican military leaders who conducted a secret reconnaissance of Spain in late 1943 and early 1944. At that time he was in Central Asia, alternating between prison and banditry.

<sup>2</sup> Gonzalez and Gorkin (52), 41, 52, 127.

since 1964, the relative prosperity that has come to Spain as a result of conservative but effective economic policies, massive American aid, and expanding if paternalistic social welfare programs, has substantially reduced the intensity of disaffection with the dictatorship. Furthermore, the recent relaxation of police oppression has opened enough avenues for action to all economic, religious, and--excepting the Communists--political groupings, that they no longer exist as underground organizations. Only the Spanish Communist Party remains entirely underground, but it is now largely paralyzed by its internal fractionalization among "Russian," "Chinese," and "Italian" (i.e. unaligned) factions and by effective police infiltration at all levels. Today, virtually all opposition groups concede that the 77-year old dictator's régime is secure until his death.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) and the Soviet intelligence services (GRU and KGB) have been actively developing covert networks inside Spain,<sup>2</sup> they have officially abandoned--at least for the present--direct

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Claire Sterling, "Franco's Foes Stop Hoping," The Reporter, Vol. 32, No. 4 (25 Feb 1965), pp. 33-36; and Welles (65), 165-223. See also U. S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, World Strengths of the Communist Party Organizations, 17th Annual Report, Jan 1965, pp. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup> Welles (65), 206-207, 210, 212-213. Oleg Penkovskiy, The Penkovskiy Papers (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 78-79, alleges that the Soviet Military Intelligence (GRU) networks inside Spain work closely with the PCE.



action, particularly anything smacking of guerrilla action.<sup>1</sup> Knowing it lacks sufficient internal strength (and divided within itself) and bereft by its past failures of wide popular support, the PCE is presumably playing a waiting game, hoping to profit from the political ferment that all opinion groups expect will follow Franco's death.<sup>2</sup>

However, a romantic and probably unrealistic spirit of guerrillaism still exists in Spain, if not among the Communists who now officially reject it, then among the new generation of Christian Democrats. Like Loyalist officers during the Civil War who romantically toyed with the thought of continuing guerrilla resistance when defeated in the field, many Christian Democrats today will say privately that if all other channels of social change become closed, they will then go "into the mountains."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lister (65), 58. The PCE leader concludes that a precondition for a successful guerrilla movement in Spain is the existence of an acute nationwide revolutionary crisis. Lister attributes the failure of the PCE's post-WW II efforts to mount guerrilla warfare to ignorance of this principle.

<sup>2</sup> Welles (65), 208.

<sup>3</sup> Personal information from a student of Spanish affairs with close and recent (to 1964) contacts with the Christian Democratic movement in Spain.

## APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON THE "CHAPAYEV'S"

The name of Chapayev, the legendary Russian peasant guerrilla leader who joined the Bolsheviks during the Russian Civil War,<sup>1</sup> became a familiar and coveted symbol in Spain.<sup>2</sup>

During the first chaotic month of the Spanish Civil War, the native Communist "El Campesino" (the Peasant) created on his own initiative on the approaches to Madrid an independent 29-man militia group that called itself "Chapayev." However, this group was almost immediately taken in hand by the Communist Party that first enlarged and attached it to the Communist-controlled Fifth Regiment as the "Campesino" Battalion and later split it off as the 46th "Campesino" Assault Division.<sup>3</sup> But Ilya Ehrenburg, Izvestiya's war correspondent in Spain, sought to preserve the potent connotations of both names

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<sup>1</sup> The basis of his legendary fame--Chapayev being in fact merely one of many such "spontaneously" arisen local revolutionary leaders--is the semi-fictionalized biographical novel of that title written in 1918 (2nd edition, 1924) by Dmitry Furmanov (1891-1925) who was assigned as political commissar to Chapayev. Furmanov figures in his own novel as "Fyodor Klychkov." Vera Alexandrova, A History of Soviet Literature (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 29-30. For an English translation see D. Furmanov, Chapayev (London: 1935).

<sup>2</sup> There was precedent: during the Russo-Polish War of 1920 the Red Army included a "Chapayev Division" of cavalry. Erickson (62), 40, 79, 89, 678.

<sup>3</sup> Gonzalez and Gorkin (52), 15; Colodny (58), 20, 101, 209.

in a series of articles about "El Campesino" by calling him "the Chapayev of the Spanish Revolution."<sup>1</sup>

One of the Anarchist columns that had begun operating in Catalonia during the first three months of the war also bore the name "Chapayev."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the 2nd Battalion of the 13th International Brigade, originally formed in December 1936, and composed mainly of Balkan Communist volunteers, was called the "Tchapiaev Battalion." It later was transferred to the 129th Brigade.<sup>3</sup> Luigi Longo refers to this unit on 27 December 1936 as the 8th

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<sup>1</sup> Gonzalez and Gorkin (52), 21. I presume this series by Ehrenburg appeared in Izvestiya. Since the consignment of "El Campesino" to the Soviet historical permafrost, his once eulogized name has not yet been thawed out for appearance in the recent writings of Soviet or Spanish Communist writers on the Communist and Soviet rôles in the Spanish Civil War, except for a mere passing mention by Ehrenburg (63), 149.

<sup>2</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 111, 137. One of the officers of this Anarchist unit from early August was a former Czarist artillery colonel named Vladimir Konstantinovich Glinoyedsky who was rumored to have fought against Chapayev at Ufa. While an émigré in Paris he joined the French CP and volunteered for Spain. When Ehrenburg (63), 136-138, met him in Nov 1936 he had been transferred to column HQ, where he served under the nom de guerre of "Colonel Julio Jiménez Orgue" until killed in action later that year. For Glinoyedsky see also Koltzov (38), diary entries for 8/8/36, 11/8/36.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas (61), 638. Colodny (58), 239, notes the existence of an anonymous book titled Chapayev Battalion published in Moscow in 1939. This is the book edited and published in Madrid by Alfred Kantorowicz in German the previous year as Tschapaiew: Das Bataillon der 21 Nationen (Madrid: Imprenta Colectiva Torrent, 1938). The story of the writing and publishing of this book is in Alfred Kantorowicz, Deutsches Tagebuch, 2 vols. (Munich: Kindler, 1959 and 1961), particularly, Part II, pp. 616-624.

Chapayev Battalion,<sup>1</sup> and it was indeed the eight battalion to be formed in the Internationals up to that time.

In late September 1936, Izvestiya's Ilya Ehrenburg visited Paris briefly, purchasing a van with money channeled through the USSR's Union of Writers, together with a portable film-projector and printing press with which he toured Aragón and Catalonia that October and November for the Loyalist Commissariat of Propaganda, showing, to public and troops alike, Chapayev<sup>2</sup> and We From Kronstadt,<sup>3</sup> which had been delivered from Moscow at his request, and also a Mickey Mouse animated cartoon he had found in France.<sup>4</sup>

When Soviet Ambassador Marcel Rosenberg arrived in Madrid on 28 August 1936 he brought additional prints of Chapayev and We From Kronstadt as well as Eisenstein's silent film classic, The Battleship Potemkin, which he distributed among the cinemas and barracks of Madrid.<sup>5</sup> Chapayev enjoyed a

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<sup>1</sup> Luigi Longo, Le Brigate Internazionali in Spagna (Bologna: Editori Riuniti, 1956), p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> This distinguished Soviet sound film was begun in 1932 and released to spectacular acclaim 7 November of that year. Directed by the brothers Sergei and Georgi Vasiliev from their scenario loosely based on the biographical novel by Furmanov. Paul Rotha, The Film Till Now (3rd ed., New York: Twayne, 1960), index; Jay Leyda, Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film (New York: Macmillan, 1960), pp. 314-318.

<sup>3</sup> This film, directed by Efim Dzigan, had just been released (20 Mar 1936).

<sup>4</sup> Ehrenburg (63), 129, 131, 140, 162, 171, who bitingly remarks: "I do not know why the money was sent through that organization; taking a humorous view of it; I suppose they wanted to show that the Union did actually help writers to carry out their creative plans."

<sup>5</sup> Colodny (58), 43, 55, based seemingly on contemporary Madrid newspapers



considerable popularity throughout Loyalist Spain at the time; but, in general, it had no more effect on tactics than the equally popular Shirley Temple's The Little Colonel or the Marx brothers' Duck Soup.<sup>1</sup>

Chapayev's name also proved a most popular Loyalist nom de guerre. Among those who adopted it was the present Hungarian Communist, Major General Mihály Szalvai, who as Major "Chapayev" commanded, first, the Dimitrov Battalion and later, in July 1937 at the Battle of Brunete, one of the half-brigades of the XVth International Brigade.<sup>2</sup> Szalvai-Chapayev is the man sometimes incorrectly identified as Tito, who was never in Spain.<sup>3</sup> At the

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and Koltzov's diary. See also Broué and Témime (61), 224; and Koltzov (38), diary entries of 13/8/36, 29/9/36, 7/11/36.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas (61), 265 n. Interestingly, Chapayev may have had more effect among the Chinese Communists at that time. At least that was the opinion of New Fourth Army Commander Yeh Ting, as expressed by him in an interview with Israel Epstein in Hankow in January 1938. I. Epstein, The People's War (London: Gollancz, 1939), p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> Szalvai--then a Captain in the Red Army--arrived in Spain on 1 Sep 1936 and served in the International Brigades successively as commander of the "Rakosí Company," the "Dimitroff Battalion," and a half-brigade of the XVth Brigade, rising from captain to major. On returning to the USSR he underwent guerrilla training. Colodny (58), 122, 224; Thomas (61), 460-461. His identification as General Szalvai is given by Broué and Témime (61), 353, who however incorrectly record his given name as "Janos." The identification of Mihály Szalvai as "Chapayev" is confirmed by Bron (64), 319 n. For his general career see Ithiel de Sola Pool, Satellite Generals (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> This legend was originally perpetrated by Fred Copeman, the former

same time, Jock Cunningham, then Chief of Staff of the same Brigade and former commander of the all-British "Saklatvala Battalion," was known as the "English Chapayev."<sup>1</sup> And according to The New York Times correspondent, the last commander (presumably Heinrich Rau) of the XIIIth International Brigade was also called "Chapiaeff."<sup>2</sup>

And yet, curiously, none of these namesakes adopted Chapayev's characteristic activity: guerrilla warfare. This may well be a result of the fact that the book and the motion picture are didactic works stressing the

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British Communist Party leader and Cunningham's successor as Commander of the British Battalion in the same Brigade with Szalvai. See his autobiography, Reason in Revolt (London: Blandford, 1948),<sup>pp.</sup> 78, 106-107, 122, 165-166, and photo opposite p. 81. Copeman is undoubtedly the source of the same misidentification made by his friend Charlotte Haldane (Mrs. J. B. S. Haldane) in her memoir, Truth Will Out (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1949), pp. 88-89, 134-135. Tito, then known as "Walter," was involved with the International Brigades, but only in their recruiting in Paris and Yugoslavia. See Vladimir Dedijer, Tito (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), pp. 111-113; and Renato Mieli, Togliatti 1937 (Milano: Rizzoli, 1964), index under "Tito."

<sup>1</sup> British CP Secretary General Harry Pollitt called him "our British Chapayev." Thomas (61), 461 and index. Cunningham returned to England in August 1937 and soon left the British Communist Party in disagreement over policies imposed on the Battalion.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert L. Matthews, The Education of a Correspondent (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946), p. 187, who witnessed the retreat of this man into France under League supervision on 8 Feb 1939.

politicization of the simple peasant leader by his disciplined Bolshevik political commissar, rather than an exhortation to or <sup>a</sup> manual of guerrilla warfare as such.<sup>1</sup> Hence its use by political commissars and propagandists rather than military commanders. In any event, the failure to use the potent symbolism of Chapayev to encourage guerrilla resistance is only consistent with the unwillingness by both the Spanish and Russian governments to enflame the countryside.

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<sup>1</sup> Actually, according to Alexandrova (63), 29, it was only in the later and posthumous editions that the Furmanov-Klychkov rôle of political commissar was stressed. The early editions of Furmanov's novel depicted Chapayev as a guerrilla leader par excellence. However, the film scenario by the Vasilievs used, and perhaps even expanded upon, the later tradition.

## APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTESA Who's Who of Guerrillas in the Spanish Civil WarIntroductory Note

This appendix is a "who's who" of those few persons known to me by name to have participated as guerrillas in the Spanish Civil War. All served with the Loyalist (Republican) forces--either as Soviet advisers, as foreign volunteers detached from the International Brigades, as Spanish troops assigned to the regular Loyalist guerrilla units, or as indigenous behind-the-lines leaders.



Aalto, Lt. William "Bill"

A thin and wiry Brooklyn Finn who volunteered for service in Spain, being originally attached--in 1937?--to the International Brigade Auto-Park as a truck driver.

Soon volunteered for transfer to the Spanish Loyalist guerrilla detachment, the 14th (Guerrilla) Corps, until presumably late 1938. During that period he served as a lieutenant on several behind-the-lines hit-and-run diversionary raids, particularly with the two other American International Brigadiers also seconded to the 14th Corps, Lt. Irving Goff (q.v.) and Alex Kunslich (q.v.).

During World War II, Aalto served as a lieutenant in the OSS in the Mediterranean Theater, in the detachment at Bari, Italy, together with Irving Goff and Milton Wolff, the former Commander of the Lincoln Battalion in Spain. All three received the Legion of Merit for their work in Italy.

After WW II, Aalto returned to his former work as an organizer for the United Electrical and Machine Workers Union (UEMWU).

References: Landis (67), xx, 135, 349, 490.

Machlin (62), 148.

Bessie (65), 132-135, where however Aalto is identified only as the "thin guerrilla."

Bayo, Alberto (1892-1967)

Born in Cuba. In August 1936 Loyalist Captain of Aviation Bayo led the Catalan militia's wasteful amphibious invasion of Ibiza and its repulse at Mallorca. In exile in Mexico he organized the guerrilla training of Fidel Castro's small band, "Che" Guevara graduating with top honors. Following Castro's successful revolution, the Spanish Government-in-exile promoted Bayo to the rank of Brigadier General. He soon returned to his native Cuba where he received the highest rank (Comandante, major) in Castro's army. As late as 1963 he was reported heading one of the Cuban guerrilla warfare training camps.

References: Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), pp. 252-254, 292, 620.

Pierre Broué and Émile Témime, La Révolution et la Guerre d'Espagne (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1961), pp. 217-218, state that the "guerrilla actions: of the militia units of Bayo and Vincente Uríbarri were insufficient to stop the advance of the Nationalist regulars.

Burnett Bolloten, The Grand Camouflage (London: Hollis & Carter, 1961), p. 250.

Jules Dubois, Fidel Castro (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), index.

For eyewitness accounts of Bayo's invasion of the Balearic Islands see Elliot Paul, The Life and Death of a Spanish Town (New York:

Bayo, Alberto (cont.)

Random House, 1937), Chapters 18-23, where, incorrectly, he is both called "Don Alfredo Bayo" and said to have learned both his English and flying in the American mid-West; and Bayo's own account, Mi desembarco en Mallorca (Guadalajara, Mexico: 1944), which I have not seen.

For other accounts of this invasion see Martín Blázquez (39), 153-155.

For further references to Bayo in Spain see H. Edward Knoblauch, Correspondent in Spain (London and New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937), pp. 43-44; and his obituary in The New York Times, 5 Aug 1967, p. 23.

Beltrán, Lt. Col. Antonio "El Esquinazado" (1897- )

A Spanish professional soldier. Served in 17th Cavalry, in World War I where, as a machine-gunner he learned English.

From May to 16 June 1938, Lt. Col. Beltrán--then secretly a Communist--and his 43rd Division was cut off in the mountains of Aragón behind the advancing Nationalist lines. This rear-guard action ended when he led his 4,000 survivors across the Pyrenees to internment in France. His brief but widely publicized success in eluding capture earned him the sobriquet "El Esquinazado," The Dodger. Although often characterized as a "guerrilla" operation, Beltrán's brave and intelligent defensive battle was, in fact, quite "conventional" in its conduct, complete with front-lines and trenches.

References: H. L. Matthews, dispatch, The New York Times, 6 Jun 1938, p. 1.  
Aznar, III (63), 148-155.

Eitingon, Leonid (c.1892-1953 or 1954)

A senior though rather shadowy Soviet career Chekist.

Eitingon was CGPU Resident in Harbin in Spring 1929 when the Chinese police raided the Soviet Consulate. As a result of his compromised rôle, he was recalled to Moscow.

In 1929 (by 23 October) Eitingon became the OGPU's "legal" Resident in Constantinople where he was nominally attached to the Soviet Embassy under the cover name of "Naumov." Eitingon-Naumov held this post until at least as late as mid-January 1930, during which period he was responsible for breaking up the Trotskyite ring set up by Jacob Blumkin in Constantinople in 1928-1929. This disclosure by Georgi Agabekov who worked with Eitingon in Constantinople has been overlooked by historians, an unfortunate oversight because it shows Eitingon's early connection with the Trotsky case.<sup>1</sup>

During the Spanish Civil War Eitingon was the principal deputy there of NKVD General Alexander Orlov (q.v.) and one of his proteges was Ramón Mercader (q.v.), a guerrilla and the fated assassin of Trotsky. In Spain, Eitingon was known as "General Kotov" in Soviet and Spanish military circles and as "Comrade Pablo" in Comintern circles.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Georges Agabekov, OGPU: The Russian Secret Terror (New York: Brentano's, 1931), pp. 180, 207-208, 238-239, 244-245.

<sup>2</sup> Orlov in his Senate executive testimony of 28 Sep 1955 (release delayed until 15 Nov 1962 because of his secret revelations concerning the later self-confessed NKVD finger-man Mark Zborowsky), made only the Eitingon-

Eitingon, Leonid (cont.)

In 1940 Eitingon carried out Stalin's directive to assassinate Leon Trotsky, Mercader being his chosen instrument.<sup>1</sup>

During World War II Eitingon was a senior official directing the Soviet Partisans against the Germans. He was executed soon after Stalin's death.

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Kotov identification. See also Orlov testimony of 15 Feb 1957, pp. 3458, 3463. Khokhlov in his Senate testimony of 21 May 1954, "Activities of Soviet Secret Service . . . ," and 1 and 16 Oct 1957.

<sup>1</sup> Levine (59).

"Fantastico, El" (c.1895-c.1938)

An Asturian whose real name was José. Had been a miner, sailor, fisherman, smuggler, and had learned guerrilla techniques in the Asturias revolt of 1934.

In early 1937 he joined the Spanish company of the Lincoln Battalion where his American comrades dubbed him "El Fantastico" to match his piratical swagger.

Sometime in 1937 he was appointed to command the 22 members of the International Brigades selected for guerrilla training. Subsequently captured and committed suicide.

Note: Not to be confused with Luchell McDaniels, an American Negro in the Lincoln Battalion who was also called "El Fantastico." See North (39), 35.

Reference: Nelson (53), 53, 132-143, for what is, undoubtedly a partly fictionalized account.

Goff, Lt. Irving

A short, broad, powerful, dark American who in the thirties had been a circus athlete, professional adagio dancer, and organizer for the Young Communist League.

Went to Spain in early (?) 1937 where he was assigned as Adjutant in the International Brigade Auto-Park at Brigade HQ in Albacete. After one or two months he transferred to the Loyalist guerrilla forces, ultimately the 14th Guerrilla Corps.

During WW II, Irving Goff was a Captain in the OSS in the Mediterranean Theater, spending much time behind enemy lines. Afterwards (c.1950), he was Chairman, Communist Party, Louisiana.

References: Landis (67), xx, 135, 349, 490.

Machlin (62), 148.

Bessie (65), 132-135, where Goff is referred to anonymously as the "heavy-set guerrilla."

Nelson (53), 133-134, 137, where Goff is identified only as "Comrade Yank."

In addition, there are nine references to Goff in U. S. House Un-American Affairs Committee (HUAC) testimony between 1947 and 1952.



Kunslich, Alex ( - c.1937)

An Eastside New York Jew who volunteered to serve in the International Brigades whence he was seconded to the Spanish Loyalist guerrilla forces, being captured and shot (or perhaps killed outright) on a behind-the-lines bridge blowing operation, presumably in 1937. Kunslich was one of three American guerrillas in Spain and the only one who perished.

Kunslich--or rather his exploit and death--has been immortalized by Hemingway <sup>as</sup> "Robert Jordan," the protagonist of For Whom the Bell Tolls.

Hemingway had learned about Kunslich from long discussions in Spain with the latter's American guerrilla comrades, Bill Aalto and Irving Goff (q.v.).

(The character of "Jordan" is, as typical of Hemingway, a composite. In this case the basic guerrilla story is that of Kunslich, the characterization and <sup>al</sup> curriculum vitae is drawn from International Brigadier Robert Merriam, the basic personality and political views are those of Hemingway himself, the physical description owes much to New York Times war correspondent Herbert L. Matthews, and the name comes from the German composer Hansjorg Dammert who changed his name to Robert Jordan when he went to Spain to serve in the Loyalist Army.

References: Whaley, Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1967), for

an analysis of the composite nature of the character "Robert Jordan.

Landis (67), 135, who first disclosed Kunslich's name.

Machlin (62), 148, who, while referring to him anonymously,

first disclosed Kunslich's connection with "Jordan."

Mercader, Ramón (1913- )

Jaime Ramón Mercader del Río Hernández was born in Barcelona in 1913. In France with Mother, 1925-1929. Sergeant in the Spanish Army, 1932-1934. Served with Communists in rebellion in Cataluña in October 1934. In prison for Communist underground activities, 1935-Feb 1936. Political Commissar (rank of junior lieutenant) in 27th Division, 1936. In 14th Guerrilla Corps, 1937. In Moscow with NKVD, Dec 1937-1938. In Paris, 1938, establishing his cover in Trotskyist circles as the Belgian aristocrat "Jacques Mornard Vandendreschd." Thence, in 1939, via New York to Mexico on a forged Canadian passport made out to "Frank Jacson." On 20 Aug 1940 he assassinated Trotsky. Tried, convicted, and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Awarded Hero of the Soviet Union medal, 1940. Released on 6 May 1960, Mercader flew to Prague where the Czech press announced "Vandendreschd" would settle.

References: Isaac Don Levine, The Mind of an Assassin (New York: Signet, 1960), pp. 15, 38-39, et passim with photos, based largely on unpublished memoirs of former Spanish Communists, including Enrique Castro Delgado.

His contribution to Communist Youth League work in Cataluña is acknowledged by Dolores Ibarruri, El Único Camino (Moscow: Ediciones en lenguas extranjeras, 1963), p. 520.

Nikolaevsky, Captain \_\_\_\_\_ ( -1937)

Aleksandr Orlov (q.v.), the former NKVD chief in Spain, has identified a Captain Nikolaevsky as an outstanding Soviet officer specializing in guerrilla warfare who operated in Spain during 1937. There Nikolaevsky commanded one of the more notably successful Loyalist guerrilla units (specializing in hit-and-run raids on Rebel airfields) until he was killed in a fire-fight by the premature detonation of one of his own grenades.

Reference: Orlov (63), 178-180.

Orlov, Aleksandr (1895- )

During the Russian Civil War Orlov served on the Southwestern Front with the XIIth Red Army where he was in charge of the counterintelligence service and also commanded behind-the-lines guerrilla detachments until 1921. In 1924 he was assigned to the OGPU as Deputy Chief, Economic Administration. Commander, NKVD Frontier Troops, Transcaucasia, 1925-1926. Chief, Economic Division, Foreign Department, NKVD, 1926-1931-?, including a military purchasing mission to Berlin. Deputy Chief, Department for Railways and Sea Transport, NKVD, 1935-early 1936.

In 1936 Orlov was appointed by the Politburo as adviser to the Spanish Republican Government on matters pertaining to counterintelligence and guerrilla warfare. Orlov was in Spain in this capacity from early September 1936 until his defection on 12 July 1938 except for a brief hospitalization in Paris in February 1937, summer 1937, and a trip to Paris in fall 1937.

After his defection he received political refuge in the United States where, in 1953 he published his memoirs, a sensational and generally accurate attack on Stalin but a quite dishonest account of his own singularly monstrous rôle as Stalin's executioner.

References: Alexander Orlov, The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes (New York: Random House, 1953).

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Alexander Orlov, testimony before the U. S. Senate in 1955 and 1957.

Priess, Victor

From Hamburg. Joined the Communist youth movement in Germany in 1923. During the next decade, as a prominent member of the KPD's underground combat units, he participated in many fights with the Nazi SA and SS. Escaped to Denmark in 1933, operating there and in Norway until late 1936 when he traveled across France to Spain to join the International Brigades. He was soon assigned to the guerrilla units. There he personally knew the Comintern leaders Marty, Zaisser, and Dahlem. Around January 1939 he fled with the retreating Loyalist forces across the Pyrenees to France and internment. In 1940 when the Nazis occupied France, his camp was evacuated to Algeria. He was freed in 1942 by the Allies and went to Egypt. From there he was summoned to Moscow to join the National Committee of Free Germany, traveling thence via Tehran. He was quickly arrested on espionage charges and imprisoned, first in the Lubianka and later (in 1946) sentenced to 25 years in the coal mines at Vorkuta. Due out in 1971, he was still there in 1952-1953 when met by Dr. Scholmer. If he survived, it is likely he was amnestied and repatriated in 1953 or 1954.

Reference: Joseph Scholmer, Vorkuta (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), pp. 160, 162-164.

Quintanilla, Luis (1905- )

Quintanilla had become commander of the Montaña Barracks in Madrid on 22 July 1936 when the Loyalists captured that stronghold. His subsequent actions involved using Loyalist militia from his Barracks command.

References: Jay Allen in Quintanilla (39), p. 21.

For an eyewitness account of Quintanilla at the Montaña

Barracks and in the Guadarramas see Buckley (40), index.

For his general career see my Hemingway and the Spanish Civil War (draft, 1966).

Robles, Francisco "Coco" (1920- )

The only son of José Robles Pazos, a Professor of Spanish at The Johns Hopkins University and close friend of John Dos Passos. Professor Robles was on summer vacation in Spain with his family--wife, son Francisco, and daughter--when the Civil War erupted in July 1936.

While his father became an interpreter and aide to General Vladimir Gorev, the principal Soviet military adviser to the Loyalist Army, young Francisco--his English fluent, having lived for years in the U. S.--became an official guide to foreign correspondents. He did this working in Valencia for the unsavory Constancia de la Mora in the Foreign Press and Censorship Department of the Foreign Ministry.

Following the sudden arrest in December 1936 and secret execution of his father by the Communists, Francisco sought in vain to enlist in the Loyalist Army, lying unconvincingly about his age. Finally--sometime after spring 1937--he was accepted as a volunteer in the special guerrilla unit. There he served with a partisan band engaged in sabotage and harrassing raids into and near Saragossa until captured by the Nationalists in 1938. Although sentenced to death, his life was spared--so I am told--on the quiet intervention of John Dos Passos. In any case, the young man survived Franco's prison until after the war when he was released and joined his mother and sister in Mexico.

References: Fischer (41), 430.

Knoblauch (37), 121.

Mora (39), 295-296.

Private information, 1967, from an acquaintance of the Robles.

Shpigelglas, Aleksandr

Veteran official of the Foreign Division (INO) NKVD. Succeeded Abram Slutsky as head of INO on the latter's execution on 17 Feb 1938.

Reference: For full biographical sketch see my Soviet Clandestine Communication Nets (69).



Slutsky, Abram ( - 17 Feb 1938)

As Chief of the Foreign Department (INO) of the NKVD until his execution in the Great Purge on 17 Feb 1938, Slutsky had the ultimate responsibility for Soviet direction of guerrilla units in Spain.

Reference: For detailed biographical sketch see my Soviet Clandestine Communication Nets (69).

Starinov, Ilya Grigorievich (1899- )

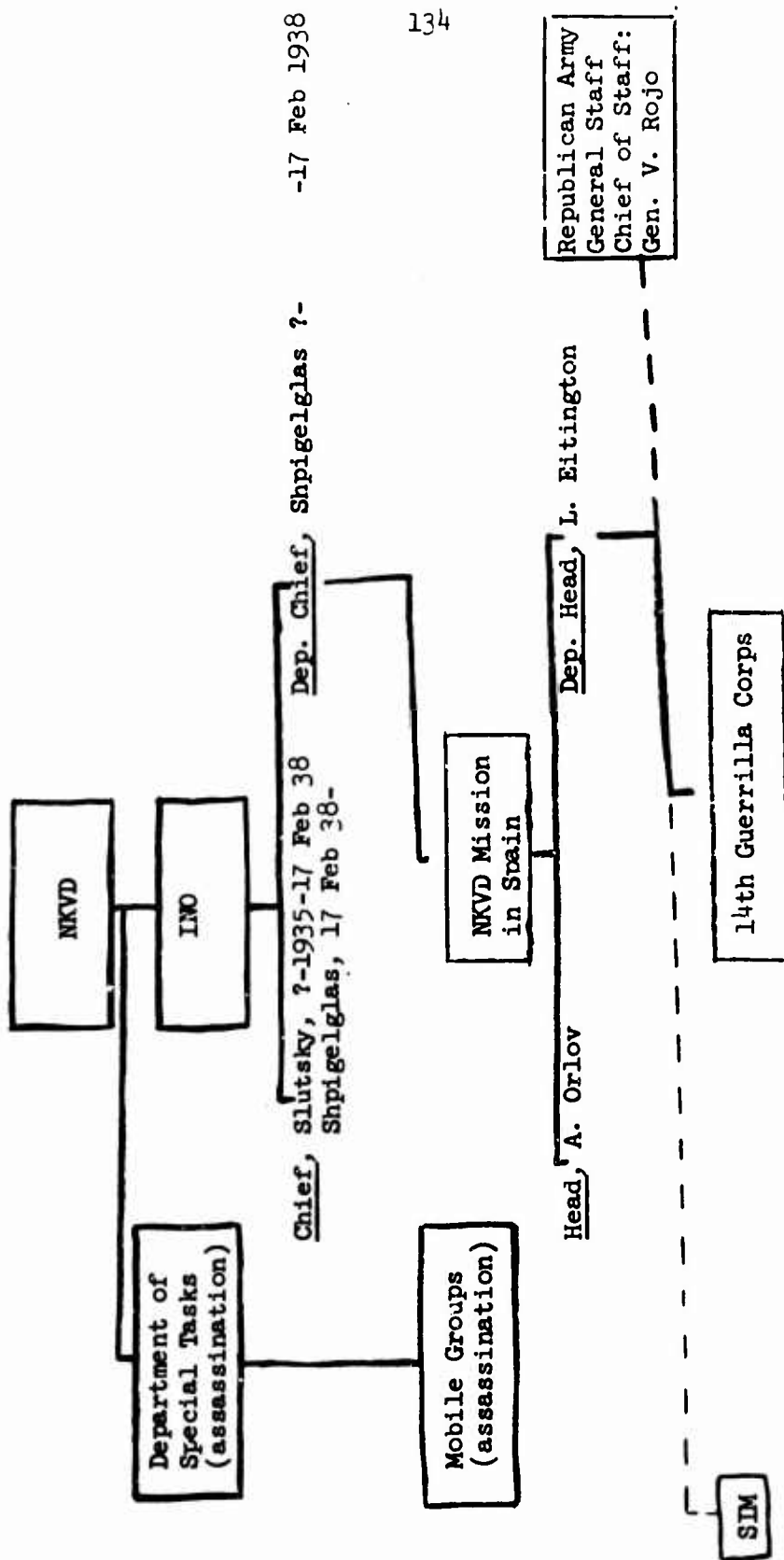
Starinov was the son of a Russian railway switchman. Joined the Red Army in 1918 serving with engineer units in the Civil War. Joined the Communist Party in 1922. Engineering and railway training and service until 1928. In charge of training special units for guerrilla operations, 1929-1933. On staff of Military Intelligence (GRU), 1933. Railway training and service, 1934-1936. Military adviser with rank of Major on guerrilla warfare in Spain, late 1936-Nov 1937. Chief (rank of colonel), Central Experimental Railway Proving Ground, Mar 1938-1939. Served as a mine expert in the Russo-Finnish War, 1939-1940. Chief, Obstacle and Mine-laying Section, Army Engineer Training Department, Main Engineering Directorate (GVITJ), 1940-1941. Served at front supervising fortification and demolition work during early German advance, Jul-Nov 1941. For rest of war assigned to Central Staff of the partisan movement and directed a guerrilla warfare school.

References: See Starinov (64); and

Seweryn Bialer (ed.), Stalin and his Generals (New York: Pegasus, 1969), p. 637.

TABLE: ORGANIZATION OF NKVD OPERATIONS IN SPAIN, 1936-1939

← MOSCOW → ← SPAIN →



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14. ABSTRACT The author examines the historic background of guerrilla warfare and compares the Spanish and the Russian tradition. He documents the direct Soviet involvement in guerrilla operations in the Spanish Civil War, many Loyalist guerrilla groups having been organized, trained and directed by the Soviet NKVD mission. He examines guerrilla activities province by province. He concludes that guerrilla warfare makes a moderately effective contribution to conventional military operations, but a frequently decisive means of mobilizing popular support for unconventional political operation. He finds the extremely reactionary Spanish Nationalists strongly influenced by foreign Fascist-Nazi forces and theorizes that the Loyalists may have lost the struggle because of their rejection of the Anarchists' policy of vigorously pursuing a social revolution in the midst of a civil war. A bibliography and a who's who of guerrillas is included.			

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